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TRANSLATING POETIC METAPHOR: EXPLORATIONS OF  
THE PROCESSES OF TRANSLATING

by

Mary Man-yee Fung

Thesis submitted for the degree of

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the submitted material as a whole is not substantially the same as any that I have previously submitted or am currently submitting whether published or in unpublished form, for a degree, diploma, or similar qualification at any university or similar institution.

The thesis includes material from the following three papers by the author:

1. '*Hamuleite jibing biyu de hanyi--fanyi guocheng de duoxitong zhiyue tantao*' 《哈姆雷特》疾病比喻的漢譯——翻譯過程的多系統制約探討 (Chinese Translations of Sickness Metaphors in *Hamlet*: An Exploration of polysystemic constraints in the process of translating), *Ge Shi Ge Fa Tan Fanyi* 各師各法:談翻譯, edited by Eva W.Y. Hung and Kwok Fan Chu (Hong Kong: the T.T. Ng Chinese Language Research Centre, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1993), pp.107-122.
2. 'Riddle in Nine Syllables: Translating Sylvia Plath', *Literary Studies East and West*, vol. 8, edited by Richard K. Seymour (Honolulu: the University of Hawaii at Manoa, in press).
3. 'The translation of metaphor', *An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Chinese-English / English-Chinese Translation*, edited by David E. Pollard and Sin Wai Chan (Hong Kong: the Chinese University Press, in press).



## INTRODUCTION

It is perhaps not far from the truth to surmise, as I.A. Richards does, that translation 'may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos'.<sup>1</sup> Fascinated by its complexity, I attempt in this dissertation to explore the process of translating by focusing on a basic and intriguing phenomenon in language and perception -- that of the metaphor. The area of inquiry will be confined to the poetic metaphor, or metaphors used in poetry and literary texts in general, and the starting point will be from selected Chinese translations. The direction of investigation is therefore from the product to the process, and is target-oriented to a certain extent. The Introduction will set out: first, some of my basic assumptions on the process of translating, second, the cognitive approach to metaphor, and third, the proposed adoption of George Lakoff's cognitive model of metaphor in case studies of translating.

### 0.1. The Process of translating

#### 0.1.1 Translation as communication

It is paradoxical and indeed revealing that I should

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1 I. A. Richards, 'Towards a theory of translating', in *Studies in Chinese Thought*, edited by Arthur F. Wright (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp.247-262 (p.250).

begin this study with a metaphor, the use of which appears to be unavoidable. Translating is an act of communication, and is most aptly understood in terms of communication. I.A. Richards adapted Claude E. Shannon and Warren Weaver's diagram of the communication engineer to his specific purpose of translating Chinese texts into English when he made the provocative remark quoted above, taking into account the complex relationship between what he called comparable past and present utterances-in-situations that affected the encoding and decoding of the message. But the foremost translation theorist who has consistently advocated the 'translation as communication' model for a systematic study of translation since the 1960s is Eugene A. Nida, a trained linguist actively involved in the translation of the Bible into lesser known languages of the world. Dictated by the nature of his work of spreading the gospel, he emphasizes the need for cultural adaptation, while drawing chiefly on the information theory. The model of communication proposed in his *Toward a Science of Translating* in 1964 includes the basic factors in communication : Source, Message and Receptor-- the Source Encodes a Message sent through a Channel to his Receptor who Decodes it, possibly affected by Noise distorting the Message.<sup>2</sup> This is a typical situation of monolingual communication. Translating is a

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2 Eugene A. Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating: With special reference to Principles and Procedures involved in Bible Translating* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964), pp.120-155.



double communication process in which the code used is human language, a systematic arrangement of symbols. A message in language A is decoded by the receptor, in this case the translator, and then transformed by a 'transfer mechanism' into language B. What remains puzzling about this model is that Nida could provide very little explanation on what takes place in this 'transfer mechanism'. He could only surmise tentatively: 'basically we may describe translating as a process in which the concept is transferred, possibly in essentially "kernel" form, and then the corresponding utterance in language B is generated' (*Toward a Science of Translating*, p.146). Refuting the conventional assumption of translating as matching corresponding symbols and grammatical structures of the two languages, he suggests that 'it is much more likely that the message of language A is decoded into a concept, and that this concept then provides the basis for the generation of an utterance in language B' (p.146).

Nida's conception of the translation-as-communication process has remained basically constant in subsequent works solely by himself or in collaboration with others. However, further dimensions are added to the basic model from time to time. For instance in *Style and Discourse* published in 1983, he pays special attention to cultural backgrounds and value systems of the source and receptors, noting that the essential problems of communication usually increase proportionate to the

differences in cultures.<sup>3</sup> Reiterating his emphasis on the importance of the backgrounds of the communicants in *From One Language to Another* published jointly with de Waard in 1986, he includes 'setting' as one of the principal elements in communication crucial to fully understanding the original and interpreting the translation.<sup>4</sup> 'Setting' is here used as an all-embracing term subsuming the socio-cultural background and all extra-linguistic factors constituting the communication situation, showing the authors' awareness of the multi-dimensional complexity of the act of translating.

Nida has never lost sight of the communication process as involving the operation of signs on which he increasingly places emphasis, in line with recent developments in semiotics, especially sociosemiotics. In his *Signs, Sense, Translation*, published in 1984, for example, he elaborates on various types of codes and signs taking part in the communication process.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, to put it in wider terms, translating is an interchange of two sets of verbal signs and such a perspective may provide insights into the operation of the process. Roman

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3 E. A. Nida, J. P. Louw, A. H. Snyman and J v W Cronje, *Style and Discourse: With special reference to the text of the Greek New Testament* (Cape Town: Bible Society, 1983), p.145.

4 Jan de Waard and Eugene A. Nida, *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986), pp.15-17.

5 Eugene A. Nida, *Signs, Sense, Translation* (Cape Town: Bible Society of South Africa, 1984).



Jakobson may be regarded as the pioneer of a semiotic concept of translating. He differentiates between three kinds of translation:

- (1) Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
- (2) Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
- (3) Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems.<sup>6</sup>

Jakobson's second kind--translation proper-- falls within the area of our concern. Translation is now firmly established as an integral part of semiotic studies as can be exemplified by the inclusion of Translation as a full-length entry in *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics* edited by Thomas A. Sebeok.<sup>7</sup> The model of translation as semiotic transformation developed by Alexander Ludskanov in 'A Semiotic Approach to the Theory of Translation' sees the translator as transformer for transmitting

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6 Roman Jakobson, 'On linguistic aspects of translation' in *On Translation*, edited by Reuben A. Brower (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp.232-239 (p.233), first edition: 1959.

7 *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Semiotics*, edited by Thomas A. Sebeok (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1986), Tome 2, pp.1107-24. Under this entry translation is defined in terms of the communication process as follows: 'the translation activity is an extension of the communication process where one distinguishes an encoder who encodes a message, and a decoder who decodes that message, being familiar with the code, and belonging to the same speech community as the encoder' (p.1107).

'constant information'. It takes into account the extra-linguistic 'reality', which is the sender's frame of reference in formulating the message and the modified world image of the receiver in interpreting the message. Ludskanov introduces the concept of semiotic transformation defined as follows: 'T<sup>S</sup>'s are replacements of the signs encoding a message by signs of another code, preserving (so far as is possible in the face of entropy) invariant information with respect to a given system of reference'.<sup>8</sup> One would of course understand Ludskanov's idea of translation as a transformation of symbols that preserves information and the so-called 'invariant information' is that which is in common between the original message and the translation. But I am rather sceptical of the 'invariant' component of the information. It is common knowledge that translating, as a unidirectional activity, is unlike strict conversion of codes by which the transformed message can be easily converted back to its original. In translating, the constant information preserved is by no means constant in every case of transformation. This is especially true in literary translation. Owing to the highly indeterminate nature of a literary text and the subjective interpretation of the translator and receptor in different cultural settings, the 'invariant' element in the message varies so widely when different translations

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8 Alexander Ludskanov, 'A Semiotic approach to the theory of translation', *Language Sciences*, 35 (April 1975), 5-8 (p.7).



of the same original are compared that the adjective appears to carry very little meaning. In translating it is perhaps more important to look for factors other than invariant.

#### 0.1.2 Interlingual and Intercultural

Translating is interlingual and intercultural communication. As early as 1945 Nida in his article entitled 'Linguistics and ethnology in translation problems' stressed the link between language and culture, regretting that 'the problems of translation have seldom been studied from this standpoint'.<sup>9</sup> Nida sees words as symbols for features of the culture. It is essential therefore that the cultural situation in both languages must be known in translating. The narrowly linguistic approach to translation was replaced in the past decade by a greater awareness of the relevance of culture. Susan Bassnett's *Translation Studies* appearing in the opening year of the 80s begins her stimulating discussion of the central issues of the emerging discipline from the perspective of 'Language and Culture'.<sup>10</sup> Mary Snell-Hornby's publication of practically the same title but with qualifications eight years later includes a chapter

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9 Eugene Nida, 'Linguistics and ethnology in translation problems', *Word*, 1, no.2 (1945), 194-208 (p.194).

10 Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies* (London and New York: Methuen, 1980).



on 'Translation as a cross-cultural event', adopting a predominately cultural approach to translation.<sup>11</sup> The 'cultural turn' advocated by Snell-Hornby is seen in all the contributions to the volume *Translation, History and Culture* (1990), jointly edited by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere.<sup>12</sup> It appears that the direction of the 'cultural turn' admits of further development when the 'culture' rather than the word becomes the 'unit' of translation.

The inter-relationship between language and culture, intricate as it is, is central to cognition and in turn to the process of translating. Formulation on the subject goes back to Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) whose central thesis is summarized by Julia M. Penn as follows: 'the world-view (*Weltanschauung*) of one people differs from that of another people to a hitherto unheard-of degree, and that this is due to the extreme difference in the "internal structure" (*innere Sprachform*) of their respective languages'.<sup>13</sup> Language is a *a priori* framework

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11 Mary Snell-Hornby, *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1988).

12 André Lefevere and Susan Bassnett, 'Introduction: Proust's Grandmother and the Thousand and One Nights. The "Cultural Turn" in Translation Studies', *Translation, History and Culture*, edited by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (London: Pinter, 1990), pp.1-13.

13 Julia M. Penn, *Linguistic Relativity versus Innate Ideas: The Origin of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis in German Thought* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972), p.19.

of cognition. Human perception results from the imposition of that framework on the unorganized flux of sensations. Different linguistic frames define different world-images.<sup>14</sup> Humboldt's assertion that 'man lives in the world about him principally, indeed exclusively, as language presents it to him'<sup>15</sup> represents the position of the relativist as opposed to the universalist.

Humboldt's linguistic relativity principle was transmitted through the German anthropologist Franz Boas (1858-1942) to Edward Sapir (1884-1936) in America. Sapir's ideas on the issue is best given in the following often-quoted passage in his paper published in 1929:

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.<sup>16</sup>

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14 George Steiner, 'Whorf, Chomsky and the Student of Literature', *New Literary History*, 4 (1972), 15-34 (p.18).

15 Wilhelm Von Humbolt, *Gesammelte Werke* (Berlin: 1941-52, 1841), VI, p.60, quoted by Julia M. Penn in *Linguistic Relativity versus Innate Ideas*, p.22.

16 'The Status of Linguistics as a Science' in *Selected writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality*, edited by David G. Mandelbaum (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of



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16 'The Status of Linguistics as a Science' in *Selected writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality*, edited by David G. Mandelbaum (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of

This passage was quoted by his student Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941) in the latter's article written in 1939 entitled 'The relation of habitual thought and behaviour to language'. It was Whorf who elaborated and refined Sapir's statement, further shedding light on it by his study of Hopi, an American Indian language, and through his enthusiasm and tireless effort, popularized the issue.

Whorf eloquently puts forward the main tenet of his thesis that language is not merely an instrument for communicating ideas, but more importantly, a shaper of ideas:

The background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade.... We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds -- and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds.<sup>17</sup>

As Humboldt attributed the shaping force of our world-

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California Press, 1949), pp.160-166 (p.162).

17 From 'Science and Linguistics' (first published in April 1940), in *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, edited by John B. Carroll (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1965), pp.207-219 (pp.212-213).



view to the 'internal structure' of language, so does Whorf to the linguistic system into which we are born, which is especially influential because of its background nature and is therefore outside our critical consciousness. The linguistic relativity principle, which is often identified with Whorf's Hypothesis, is explicitly stated by him on two occasions. He puts it first in a formal statement: 'we are thus introduced to a new principle of relativity, which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or in some way be calibrated'.<sup>18</sup> The same principle is later put forward again by Whorf, in informal terms: 'users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars towards different types of observation, and hence are not equivalent as observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world'.<sup>19</sup> Human beings born into different language communities are led by the inherent linguistic systems to formulate different 'world-views' or 'thought worlds', the microcosm against which they measure and understand the macrocosm in which they live.

The linguistic relativity principle is open to two versions of interpretation, in terms of its degree of

18 *Language, Thought, and Reality*, p.214.

19 From 'Linguistics as an exact science' (first published in April 1940), in *Language, Thought, and Reality*, pp.220-232 (p.221).



compulsion. The strong version stipulates that the native tongue of an individual determines the way he perceives and thinks while the weak version suggests 'influence' rather than linguistic determinism. Carroll, the editor of Whorf's writings, chooses to use 'influences' rather than 'determines' when he sums up the principle of linguistic relativity in his Introduction to the book. Although one must concede that Whorf is not absolutely consistent in his use of language, yet on the whole his attitude one can deduce from his writings is more moderate than extreme except for occasional hyperboles thrown in, and he is not a total relativist as George Lakoff has convincingly argued.<sup>20</sup> Whorf has been charged with causal determinism in relation to language and culture. However, an examination of Whorf's writings will bear out the fact that he believes language patterns and cultural norms have grown up together, constantly influencing each other and there is always a give-and-take between language and culture as a whole. Whorf says, he 'should be the last to pretend there is anything so definite as "a correlation" between culture and language'. He is interested in connections and relations between language and culture of which language is a part: 'There are connections but not correlations or diagnostic correspondences between cultural norms and linguistic

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20 George Lakoff, Chapter 18, 'Whorf and Relativism' in *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp.304-337 (p.328).

patterns.... there is a relation between a language and the rest of the culture of the society which uses it.'<sup>21</sup> In this way Whorf, contrary to the attack levelled at him by some of his critics, is in line with Sapir who states, 'nor can I believe that culture and language are in any true sense causally related'.<sup>22</sup>

It may be more interesting to espouse the strong hypothesis, but the interplay between language and thought is so intricate that a formulation that attempts to represent the real state of affairs is never conveniently bold and clear-cut. Some critics of the Whorfian Hypothesis, especially those adopting the extreme version, claim that since language determines the way we see and think, people speaking different languages would not be able to understand each other and interlingual translation is impossible. This is hardly the case. Harry Hoijer presents a more balanced view in his discussion of the Hypothesis: 'The languages of human beings do not so much determine the perceptual and other faculties of their speakers vis-a-vis experience as they influence and direct these faculties into prescribed channels. Intercultural communication, however wide the difference between cultures may be, is not impossible. It is simply more or less difficult, depending on the degree

21 *Language, Thought, and Reality*, pp.156,147,139,159.

22 Herbert Landor in his book *Language and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), quotes Sapir 'in advance confutation of Whorfean relativism' (p.216), first edition: 1965.



of difference between the cultures concerned.<sup>23</sup> This, together with an innate human capacity for conceptualization<sup>24</sup>, render intercultural understanding possible. And to the extent that the habitual mode of expression and the grammatical and lexical resources differ from one language to the other, so would the translator encounter linguistic difficulties in addition to those created by cultural differences. Whorf never advocated absolute nontranslatability. Instead, as a field-linguist he is constantly translating between English and the language of his research. The carefully guarded way in which he speaks of rendering Hopi into English shows he has a full understanding of the complexities of translating:

In order to describe the structure of the universe according to the Hopi, it is necessary to attempt--*insofar as it is possible--*to make explicit this metaphysics, properly describable only in the Hopi language, *by means of an approximation expressed in our*

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23 Harry Hoijer, 'The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis', in *Language in Culture: Conference on the Interrelations of Language and other aspects of Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), pp.92-105 (p.94).

24 George Steiner is right in saying that there are nuances of linguistic relativism in universalist grammars as there are universalist notions in the relativism of Humboldt-Sapir-Whorf in his 'Whorf, Chomsky and the Student of literature', *New Literary History*, 4 (1972), 15-34. George Lakoff argues that human beings share a general conceptualizing capacity regardless of what differences they may have in conceptual systems in *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, pp.330-334.

*language, somewhat inadequate it is true, yet by availing ourselves of such concepts as we have worked up into relative consonance with the system underlying the Hopi view of the universe (italics mine).*<sup>25</sup>

It is the underlying framework of constant interaction between language and culture, be it conscious or unconscious, that fundamentally affects the process of translating.

### 0.1.3 Polysystemic and interdisciplinary

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis finds resonance in the Soviet scholar Juri Lotman's semiotic interpretation of culture.<sup>26</sup> According to Lotman, culture functions as a system of signs converting human experience into text which forms the community's collective memory. Language is taken as the primary modelling system and cultural phenomena (<sup>in</sup>which I would include literature, social and political institutions, etc.) as secondary modelling systems. In putting forward his theory, first he stresses

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25 See his 'An American Indian Model of the Universe' in *Language, Thought, and Reality*, pp.57-64 (p.58). Humboldt's apparently contradictory statements on the possibilities and limits of translation--in one instance asserting that all translation is impossible while on another occasion claiming that everything can be expressed in any language-- are discussed in Wolfram Wilss, *The Science of Translation: Problems and Methods* (Tubingen: Narr, 1982), pp.35-37.

26 Yu M. Lotman and B. A. Uspensky, 'On the Semiotic Mechanism of Culture', *New Literary History: A Journal of Theory and Interpretation*, 9, no.2 (Winter 1978), 211-232.



the inseparability of language and culture: language cannot but be steeped in the context of culture while culture must have the structure of natural language at its centre. Second, he sees language and culture as sign-governed patterns of human behaviour or semiotic systems.

Itamar Even-Zohar develops the idea of semiotic phenomena as systems into the 'Polysystem theory'. He argues that a semiotic system is necessarily a heterogeneous, open structure, and is therefore necessarily a polysystem--'a multiple system, a system of various systems which intersect with each other and partly overlap, using concurrently different options, yet functioning as one structured whole, whose members are interdependent'.<sup>27</sup> His notion of a dynamic system, undergoing constant change, the process of which is in itself a system, dates back to the Russian Formalists and the Czech Structuralists. Even-Zohar's formulation of the literary polysystem is succinctly summed up by Theo Hermans:

[Even-Zohar] developed the notion of literature as a 'polysystem', i.e. as a differentiated and dynamic 'conglomerate of systems' characterized by internal oppositions and continual shifts. Among the oppositions are those between 'primary' (or innovatory) and 'secondary' (or conservative) models and types, between the centre of the system and its periphery, between canonized and non-canonized strata, between more or less strongly codified forms, between the various genres, etc.

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27 Itamar Even-Zohar, 'Polysystem Theory', *Poetics Today* (Special issue: Literature, Interpretation, Communication), 1, no.1-2 (Autumn 1979), 287-310 (p.290).



The dynamic aspect results from the tensions and conflicts generated by these multiple oppositions, so that the polysystem as a whole, and its constituent systems and subsystems, are in a state of perpetual flux, forever unstable.<sup>28</sup>

The literary polysystem co-exists with other cultural systems and correlates with them.

Translating as a communication process involving multi-relationship between various systems, each of which may constitute the subject of an independent discipline, must of necessity be interdisciplinary in character. Boguslaw P. Lawendowski forecast in mid-1970 that 'a future theory of translation will have a semiotic framework embracing not only language but other anthropo- and zoosemiotic systems, although the priority will no doubt rest with language' and called for 'interdisciplinary cooperation'.<sup>29</sup> Rainer Schulte, in his article entitled 'The Act of translation: From interpretation to interdisciplinary thinking', explains that translating as a never-ending process of relating words to their communicative situation in the act of discovering the dynamics of that situation for making translation decisions is inherently interdisciplinary

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28 See Theo Hermans, 'Introduction: Translation Studies and a New Paradigm' in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* edited by himself (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1985), pp.7-15 (p.11).

29 See his paper 'On Semiotic Aspect of Translations', written in 1975-76, published in *Sight, Sound and Sense*, edited by T. Sebeok (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), pp.264-282 (p.272).

thinking.<sup>30</sup> Scholars in the past decade have laid more and more stress on the need for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of translation.<sup>31</sup> Considering the nature of the translating process in general, one would venture to name some of the relevant disciplines: contrastive linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropology, philosophy, psychology, sociology, semiotics, communication theory, and information theory. But in each particular instance of translating other disciplines will be involved in accordance with the subject matter to be translated.

#### 0.1.4 A Model of the Process of Translating

By way of recapitulation I shall formulate my

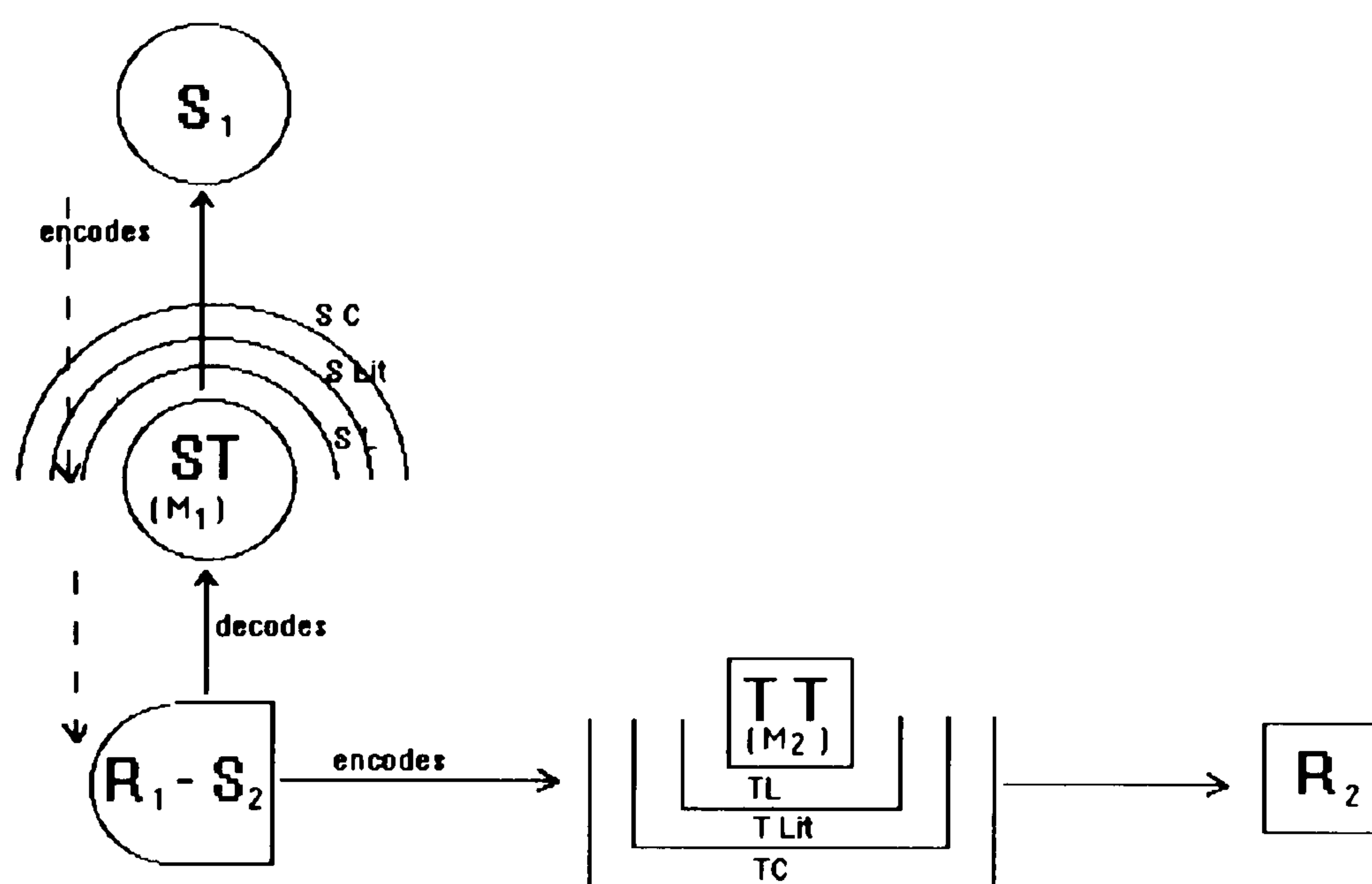
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30 Rainer Schulte, 'The Act of translation: From interpretation to interdisciplinary thinking', *Translation Review*, 4 (1979), 3-8.

31 The following are some works that advocate an interdisciplinary approach to translation, naming in each case the disciplines the author considers relevant: (1) Wolfram Wilss, 'The role of the Translator in the Translation Process', *Translation Perspectives II: Selected Papers, 1984-85*, edited by Marilyn Gaddis Rose (Bingham, New York: SUNY, 1985), pp.12-27; (2) Jin Di 金隄 *Dengxiao Fanyi Tansuo* 等效翻譯探索. (In Search of Equivalent Effect in Translating) (Beijing: China Translation and Publishing Corporation, 1989), p.9; (3) Mary Snell-Hornby, *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*; (4) Dirk Delabastita, '"There's a double tongue": An investigation into the translation of Shakespeare's wordplay with special reference to *Hamlet*' (doctoral dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1990), pp. 75-82; now published by Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993.



understanding of the process of translating into the following model:



S = Source      R = Receptor      M = Message

ST = Source text    SL = Source Language system

SLit = Source Lit system    SC = Source Cultural system

TT = Target text    TL = Target Language system

TLit = Target Lit system    TC = Target Cultural system

The conventional model of the translating process usually takes the form of a horizontal linear string to represent the double communication events:  $S_1 \rightarrow M_1 \rightarrow R_1-S_2 \rightarrow M_2 \rightarrow R_2$ . This model deviates from the conventional one by focusing on the translator  $R_1-S_2$ , who initiates the process of interlingual and intercultural communication. His strategic position at the intersection of the two strings indicates that the two communication events take place in different time and space. The translator sets the communication in motion by decoding  $M_1$  in a pre-



existing text ST.  $M_1$  was encoded some point in time (represented by the broken arrows) by  $S_1$  who may or may not have included the translator as his intended receptor. ST written in Language A, is embedded in its linguistic, literary and other cultural systems and shares their characteristics (represented by the circular shape). I use the word 'system' with the full understanding that each system is in fact a complex whole of several networks of relations which some theorists would prefer to label polysystem, while reserving the word 'polysystem' for denoting the total complex constituted by the above systems. The model proposed here is designed for the translating of literary works and may be adapted for the translating of other text types by positing other relevant systems in the Source and Target polysystems in which the texts are embedded. The translator, first acting as receptor to the original message, attempts to comprehend it in its original communication situation within the framework of its polysystem. He then becomes the source  $S_2$  for encoding  $M_2$  in TT for his intended receptors  $R_2$ . TT written in Language B is embedded in and constrained by its own linguistic, literary, and cultural systems (represented by squares) different from those connected with Language A. The translator is usually a member of the target community but not necessarily so. He must however be bilingual and bicultural, hence represented by half-circular and half-square shape. To transform a circle (ST) into a square (TT) forcefully sums up the dynamics

involved in translating, providing at the same time an answer to the frequently disputed question of the possibility of translation and translation equivalence.

## 2. Metaphor

A full treatment of the various approaches to metaphor lies outside the scope of this dissertation. Suffice it here to distinguish two opposing stances: the traditional one of seeing metaphor as a deviation from ordinary language use, a mere ornament, and the cognitive approach of taking metaphor as pervasive and fundamental in language use, as a way of perception. The dissertation endorses the second view.

### 0.2.1 The classical or traditional stance

Although Aristotle takes the classical stance with regard to metaphor, his views are more liberating and thought-provoking. His famous definition that 'metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy'<sup>32</sup>, given in full in

32 Aristotle, *Rhetoric and Poetics*, translated by W. Rhys Roberts and Ingram Bywater, introduction by Edward P.J. Corbett (New York: the Modern Library, 1984), p.251, 1st edition: 1954. Other writings of Aristotle quoted in this section are from the same edition.



his *Poetics* (1457b 6-9), is adopted in his *Rhetorics* as well. That metaphor (as a master trope) is defined at the level of the name appears to have put the focus of the very existence of metaphor on the unit of the word. Moreover, it is defined in terms of deviation as metaphor is given a name that originally or properly belongs to something else. However, deviation in this context, as Paul Ricoeur suggests, can be viewed as categorial transgression, a dis-ordering in a scheme of classification in which metaphor destroys an existing order only to invent a new one for the purpose of redescribing reality.<sup>33</sup> In this way metaphor can be said to convey 'learning and knowledge through the medium of the genus' (*Poetics* 1410b 13). The movement of the name between species and genus, species and species, or the transference through analogy, depends on the network of relations between the two names, which may belong to different domains, so that a wider area than the word is actually involved.

The above interpretation points in the direction of rejecting any reduction of metaphor to a mere ornament. In fact evidence can be found in Aristotle's writings in which he praises metaphor's power of generating creative perception. Aristotle considers it 'a sign of genius' to

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33 Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language*, translated by Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), p.22, 1st edition: 1978.

be a master of metaphor, 'since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars' ( *Poetics* 1459a 5-8). Elsewhere he also says that 'it is from metaphor that we can best get hold of something fresh' ( *Rhetoric* 1410b 13) and that metaphor makes 'us seize a new idea promptly' ( *Rhetoric* 1410b 21). His understanding of the working of metaphor can be said to be dynamic in that metaphor functions by 'surprising the hearer' ( *Rhetoric* 1412a 18), by setting 'the scene before our eyes' ( *Rhetoric* 1410b 32), and by presenting 'things as in a state of activity' ( *Rhetoric* 1411b 25). One would venture to conclude that Aristotle, while steeped in the classical tradition, affirms the positive and creative functioning of metaphor, bringing it beyond the narrow confines of rhetoric, which has assigned it the status of a figure of speech for embellishment.

#### 0.2.2 Toward a cognitive concept of metaphor

As a precursor to the modern cognitive approach to metaphor, the eighteenth century Neapolitan philosopher and rhetorician Giambattista Vico (1688-1744)<sup>34</sup> deserves

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34 Vico found that the first peoples were poets who spoke in poetic characters. This discovery, which is the master key of his monumental work, *The New Science*, results from the persistent research of almost all his literary life. See *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, revised translation of the Third Edition (1744), translated by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1968), Paragraph 34. References to quotations of Vico hereafter are to paragraphs of



a brief discussion. The following of Vico's findings are especially insightful and relevant to this study: (1) poetic speech or figurative language is the primary linguistic mode (as opposed to the classical assertion that literal language is primary and prior to the figurative); (2) metaphor is a fundamental cognitive operation; (3) metaphorical concepts are embodied and (4) the linguistic behaviour of primitive men gives support to linguistic relativism.

Working on the linguistic data provided by ancient fables, myths, and Homeric epic poetry, Vico tries to reconstruct the way in which the 'first men' apprehended their environment and hence formed their world-view or metaphysics consistent with those conditions. The first men, yet 'without power of ratiocination, were all robust sense and vigorous imagination' (P.375), so that the senses were their sole way of knowing things (P.374). Unable to explain 'the natural causes producing things ...by analogy with similar things' (P.180) in the Aristotelian sense, they resorted to myth-making by attributing 'senses and passions ...to bodies, and to bodies as vast as sky, sea, and earth' (P.402). Metaphor is considered by Vico to be the most necessary and frequent of the first tropes by which the first men 'attributed to bodies the being of animate substances, with capacities measured by their own, namely sense and passion, and in this way made fables of them. Thus every

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this work.

metaphor so formed is a fable in brief.' (P.404) And 'the fables being imaginative class concepts' (P.403), it follows that the metaphor is an imaginative class concept with cognitive function.

The way the first men attempted to understand the world is by attributing 'their own nature to them' (P.180). Vico explains that 'the human mind, because of its indefinite nature, wherever it is lost in ignorance makes itself the rule of the universe in respect of everything it does not know' (P.181). To be more explicit, metaphorical concepts in the Vichian sense are embodied. This view is supported by his saying on P.236 that 'the human mind is naturally inclined by the senses to see itself externally in the body, and only with great difficulty does it come to understand itself by means of reflection' and again on P.237 that 'words are carried over from bodies and from the properties of bodies to signify the institutions of the mind and spirit'. He quotes a number of examples from different languages to illustrate the fact that 'the greater part of the expressions relating to inanimate things are formed by metaphor from the human body and its parts and from the human senses and passions' (P.405).

Tracing the development of perception through the ages, Vico summarizes as follows: 'Men at first feel without perceiving, then they perceive with a troubled and agitated spirit, finally they reflect with a clear mind' (P.218). Primitive men 'perceive with a troubled and agitated spirit' and, overwhelmed by fear and wonder



resulting from the impact of astounding immediate experience, in a flash of intuitive insight, fuse 'sense and passion' into the metaphorical image. In this way primitive man makes or remakes reality meaningful to him and is in this sense a 'maker' or 'poet'. It is with conviction, supported by his lifelong investigation, that Vico persistently calls primitive men poets throughout his work. By the same token, he *claims* that poetic or metaphorical perception is prior to abstract reasoning; therefore figurative language is prior to literal language and metaphor is fundamental to perception.

That primitive men's poetic language determines their imaginative perception of reality and is bound up with their world-view points to the inseparable relationship between language and thought. Gillo Dorfles notes in brief that this Vichian conception 'appears today in very provocative remarks made by Benjamin Lee Whorf on the basic effect of our way of speaking on our way of thinking'.<sup>35</sup> Vico's tireless study enables him to grasp the principle of linguistic relativity. Putting him in historical perspective, George Steiner pronounces: 'Vico's opposition to Descartes and to the extensions of Aristotelian logic in Cartesian rationalism made of him the first true "linguistic historicist" or relativist'.<sup>36</sup>

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35 Gillo Dorfles, 'Myth and Metaphor in Vico and in Contemporary Aesthetics', in *Giambattista Vico: an International Symposium*, edited by Giorgio Tagliacozzo (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), pp.577-590 (p.587).

36 George Steiner, 'Whorf, Chomsky and the Student of

The twentieth century saw the emergence of a direction of research very much in line with the Vichian concepts examined above. In 1936 I. A. Richards published *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, a collection of lectures, which engendered a great deal of discussion among scholars in the field. Richards, in his lecture on 'Metaphor', argues against the traditional reductionist view of metaphor. He asserts that first, metaphor is the omnipresent principle of language present in all human discourse and is by no means deviant; second, metaphor is perception or intercourse of thought. He proposes what has come to be called the 'interaction' theory of metaphor. According to Richards' formulation, 'when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word, or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction'.<sup>37</sup> In his following lecture, collected in the same book, he takes it further 'to include, as metaphoric, those processes in which we perceive or think of or feel about one thing in terms of another' (p.116), a definition that anticipates George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's formulation. His idea that thought is metaphoric, namely, that the human conceptual system is metaphorically structured, is again later developed by Lakoff and Johnson.

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Literature', p.16.

37 I.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.93.



Richards' interaction theory is further elaborated by Max Black. The interaction, as seen by Richards, is 'a borrowing between and intercourse of thoughts, a transaction between contexts' (p.94), focusing on 'a single word or phrase'. Black equates metaphor with 'metaphorical statement'. 'A statement', he says, 'will be identified by quoting a whole sentence, or a set of sentences, together with as much of the relevant verbal context or the non-verbal setting as may be needed for an adequate grasp of the actual or imputed speaker's meaning'.<sup>38</sup> Metaphor is therefore understood in the full context of the communication situation. Black considers the metaphorical statement to consist of two distinct subjects, the 'primary' subject (equivalent to Richards' tenor) and the 'secondary' subject (Richards' vehicle). The metaphorical statement works by 'projecting upon' the primary subject a set of 'associated implications' (called a 'system of associated commonplaces' earlier by Black in his paper 'Metaphor'<sup>39</sup>) comprised in the 'implicative complex', which determines a set of 'current opinions shared by members of a certain speech-community' ( 'More about metaphor', p.442). The following is the way how 'interaction' takes place: '(i) the presence of the primary subject incites the hearer to select some of the

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38 Max Black, 'More about metaphor', in *Dialectica*, 31, no.3-4 (1977), pp.431-457 (p.437).

39 Max Black, 'Metaphor', in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, New Series, 55 (1954-1955), pp.273-294 (p.287).

secondary subject's properties; and (ii) invites him to construct a parallel 'implicative complex' that can fit the primary; and (iii) reciprocally induces parallel changes in the secondary subject' ( 'More about metaphor', p.442) and, as a rule, can be readily and freely evoked. As can be seen from the foregoing statement both the maker and the hearer/reader of the metaphor function in the communication process by manipulating (selecting, emphasizing, suppressing and organizing) properties of the two subjects belonging to different domains in the light of their perceived relationship. The result is that new relationships are formed in a 'flash of insight'. In this sense, Black concedes that metaphors can sometimes function as 'cognitive instruments' as they 'enable us to see aspects of reality that the metaphor's production helps to constitute' ( 'More about metaphor', p.454). To put it in another way, metaphors create a new perspective from which to view the 'world'.

The interaction theory however has been criticized by George Lakoff in his book *More than Cool Reason* in collaboration with Mark Turner. Lakoff thinks that the theory starts from a correct observation but <sup>is</sup> incorrectly analyzed. A metaphor like LIFE IS A JOURNEY is by no means bidirectional, but is mapped one way only, from the source domain of journey onto the target domain of life. He argues that if the operation were comparing the two domains in both directions and picking out the similarities, then our language should go both ways. We should speak of journeys conventionally in the language



of life, perhaps calling embarcations 'births' and departures 'deaths'. He concludes therefore: 'The predictions made by the claim of bidirectionality are not borne out, since neither the logic nor the language of the target domain is mapped onto the source domain. And finally, where there are domains A and B with mappings both from A to B and from B to A, they turn out to be different mappings rather than a single bidirectional mapping.'<sup>40</sup>

### 0.2.3 Lakoff and Johnson's theory of everyday metaphor

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson proposed a theory of metaphor in their collaborative work *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), which opened up a new perspective on our understanding of the nature of our everyday language. In the main they follow the trend of development discussed in the previous section in affirming the non-deviant nature of metaphor and its cognitive value. Drawing on a large number of examples, they are able to show that metaphor is pervasive in everyday language, thought, and action. Linguistic evidence points to the fact that our conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. Our everyday metaphorical concepts of which we are largely unaware , structure the way we perceive

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40 George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.133.

reality and behave in our community.

To Lakoff and Johnson, 'the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another'.<sup>41</sup> In a joint paper entitled 'Metaphor and Communication' published in December 1982, they reiterate their definition of metaphor with only very slight change of wording, and stress that metaphors are the normal way we understand the vast majority of our most important concepts.<sup>42</sup> In the very beginning of *Metaphors We Live By*, the authors point out that 'metaphors' referred to in their book should be understood as 'metaphorical concepts'. This also explains why their everyday conceptual metaphors are not even expressed in the surface structure of language. For instance, one of their much-discussed metaphorical concepts, ARGUMENT IS WAR, is reflected in a wide variety of ordinary expressions like 'Your claims are *indefensible*', 'He *attacked* every weak point in my argument', and 'He *shot down* all of my arguments', etc. (*Metaphors We Live By*, p.4). What is important is that our concept of argument is structured

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41 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p.5.

42 M. Johnson and G. Lakoff, 'Metaphor and Communication', reproduced by L.A.U.T. (Linguistic Agency, University of Trier), December 1982, series A, paper no.97, pp.1-13 (p.1). The definition given here is as follows: 'Instead of being merely a matter of words, metaphors are fundamentally conceptual in nature: they provide a means of understanding one kind of thing or experience in terms of another kind' (p.1).



in terms of war, and we normally and unconsciously conduct an argument as though we were waging war.

Metaphors can be divided into three broad categories. ARGUMENT IS WAR belongs to the category of 'structural metaphor', whereby one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another. Then there is 'ontological metaphor', by which an abstract idea or an aspect of our experience is understood in terms of an entity or substance; <sup>and finally, there is</sup> 'orientational metaphor' by which something not occupying space in actuality is thought of as having spatial orientation. Lakoff and Johnson emphasize the inseparability of metaphors from their experiential bases. Many conceptual metaphors 'are based on physical experiences as they are given to us in our culture', e.g. 'CONTROL IS UP and TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT are based on our direct physical experiences of vertical orientation and moving objects, respectively' ('Metaphor and Communication', p.5). The choice of one physical basis instead of other possible ones hinges on cultural coherence. It is claimed that 'the most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture' (*Metaphors We Live By*, p.22).

The experiential bases of metaphor are developed in what they later call 'experientialist cognition' explored in Lakoff's *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (1987) and Johnson's *The Body in the Mind* (1987). According to Lakoff, "experiential" is to be taken in the broad sense, including basic sensory-motor, emotional, social,

and other experiences of a sort available to all normal human beings -- and especially including *innate capacities* that shape such experience and make it possible'.<sup>43</sup> He sees 'human thought as essentially embodied, involving the kind of structured experience that comes from having human bodies', and 'meaning as essentially involving an *imaginative projection*, using mechanisms of schematization, categorization, metaphor and metonymy to move from what we experience in a structured way with our bodies to abstract cognitive models' ('Cognitive Semantics', p.121).

The theory of experientialist cognition posits two kinds of concepts that are meaningful because of their roles in bodily experience: (1) Basic-level concepts and (2) Image-schemas. Basic-level concepts are concepts for objects, actions, and properties structured at that level, 'the level at which human beings interact with their environment most effectively and process and store and communicate information most efficiently' ('Cognitive Semantics', p.133). Objects like *cat* or *table* are basic-level categories, while *animal* or *furniture* are superordinate categories. Actions like *walking* and *drinking* are basic-level, whereas *moving* and *ingesting* are superordinate and *ambling* and *slurping* are

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43 George Lakoff, 'Cognitive Semantics', in *Meaning and Mental Representations*, edited by Umberto Eco, Marco Santambrogio and Patrizia Violi (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), pp.119-154 (p.120).



subordinate. Likewise, *tall*, *hard*, and *cold* are basic-level properties, as are the basic colours. Image-schemas (e.g., containers, paths, links, part-whole schemas, force-dynamic schemas, etc.) are called kinesthetic image-schemas in Lakoff and Johnson's two erudite works published independently in 1987 mentioned above. They argue that experience is structured in a significant way prior to, and independent of, any concepts. A kinesthetic image schema like the 'container' schema consists of a boundary distinguishing an interior from an exterior, since we experience our bodies both as containers and as things in containers (e.g., rooms) constantly. When we extend our body-based understanding of things in terms of 'container' schemas to abstract concepts we have metaphors like THE VISUAL FIELD IS A CONTAINER reflected in expressions such as 'go out of sight' (*Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, pp.271-273).

The kinds of recurrent imaginative structures required for defining concepts are called 'frames' or 'schemas'. They have been developed by Charles Fillmore, who thinks that words represent categorizations of experience underlain by a motivating situation occurring against a background of knowledge and experience. Each case frame characterizes a small abstract 'scene' or 'situation'. Hence 'frames' or 'schemas' are alternatively known as 'scenario' or 'script'.<sup>44</sup> Lakoff

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44 Charles J. Fillmore, 'Frame Semantics' in *Linguistics in the Morning Calm*, edited by the Linguistic Society of Korea (Seoul: Hanshin, 1982), pp.111-138 (pp.111-112, 115).

endorses the claim of cognitive anthropology that most of our cultural reality resides in the culture-specific schemas, which are products of human imaginative capacities. 'Frames', as Lakoff sees them, are special cases of 'idealized cognitive models' (ICMs) by which we organize our knowledge, each of which is a complex structured whole, a gestalt. Take the case of the word or category 'bachelor'. It is defined by Fillmore as an unmarried adult man, motivated against a background of a human society in which certain expectations about marriage and marriageable age obtain, so that male participants in long-term unmarried couplings would not ordinarily be described as bachelors, nor would the pope be properly thought of as a bachelor. Lakoff explains Fillmore's formulation in more specific terms: '*bachelor* is defined with respect to an ICM in which there is a human society with (typically monogamous) marriage, and a typical marriageable age. The idealized model says nothing about the existence of priests, "long-term unmarried couplings," homosexuality, Moslems who are permitted four wives and only have three, etc. With respect to this idealized cognitive model, a *bachelor* is simply an unmarried adult man' (*Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, p.70). The ICM may not fit the world very precisely. If the ICM fits our understanding of a situation perfectly, then we have a prototypical or representative example of 'bachelor'. An ICM uses four

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kinds of structuring principles: propositional structure ( as in Fillmore's frames), image-schematic structure, metaphoric mappings, and metonymic mappings. A metaphorical cognitive model involves a mapping from a propositional or image-schematic model in one domain (source domain) to a corresponding structure in another domain (target domain), while a metonymic model involves a function from one element of the model to another.

#### 0.2.4 Lakoff and Turner's theory of poetic metaphor

In *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, George Lakoff and Mark Turner analyzed the role of metaphor in poetry on the theoretical basis of everyday metaphor advocated in *Metaphors We Live By*. Poetic metaphor is an extension of everyday metaphor. Lakoff and Turner's discussion of the opening lines of Emily Dickinson's poem well illustrates the point:

Because I could not stop for Death  
He kindly stopped for me--  
The Carriage held but just Ourselves--  
And Immortality.

When the poet speaks of Death as a coachman, she is using an extension of our ordinary metaphorical conception of DEATH AS DEPARTURE, which in turn is derived from the LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor. Life's journey has an end, and death departs therefrom. Using the basic metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS, we view death as a final state, and therefore a final location. Via DEATH IS DEPARTURE and

DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION, we understand death in terms of a departure from this life and a journey toward a final destination. The departure of the coach is the act of dying, and the agent who assists the speaker to a final destination, the coachman, is the personification of death. The above conceptual metaphors already existed in Western culture, in the everyday thought of ordinary people as well as in their poetic tradition. The poet extended and composed these metaphors in novel ways.

Lakoff and Turner take special care to point out that it is essential to make the distinction between conceptual metaphors, which are cognitive in nature, and their linguistic expressions.<sup>45</sup> The linguistic expressions of poetic metaphors may be unique, but their underlying conceptual metaphors are usually quite common. There is a relatively small number of existing basic conceptual metaphors, a basic metaphor being one whose use is conventional, unconscious, automatic and typically unnoticed. Basic metaphors are part of the common cognitive apparatus shared by members of a culture. They are systematic in that there is a fixed correspondence between the structures of the target and source domains. The relative small number of basic metaphors can give

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45 This point is stressed perhaps in answer to the charge brought against Lakoff and Johnson by Ronald R. Butters that they made indiscriminate use of the term metaphor. See 'Do "Conceptual Metaphors" Really Exist?', *SECOL Review: Conference on Linguistics*, 5, no.3 (Fall 1981), 108-117.



rise to an infinitude of potential metaphorical expressions at the linguistic level. Three stances are taken by poets with respect to these basic metaphors: 'the first is simply to versify them in automatic ways', resulting in lame verse; 'the second is to deploy them masterfully, combining them, extending them, and crystallizing them in strong images', as in Shakespeare; the third is 'offer new modes of metaphorical thought' or to deploy our conventional basic metaphors in unusual ways, or 'to destabilize them to reveal their inadequacies for making sense of reality', as in avant-garde poetry (*More than Cool Reason*, pp.51-52).

Taking up the concept of 'schema', Lakoff and Turner elaborate on its functioning by describing it as a skeletal structure of knowledge, whose components are 'slots' to be filled out. For instance the JOURNEY schema may or may not have a VEHICLE as a component, and the optional component VEHICLE may or may not be filled out by CARRIAGE. Their particular choices give the metaphor richness and power. Besides the power of options, there are the power to structure, the power of reason and evaluation, and the power of being there.

Poetic metaphors operate by extending, elaborating, questioning and combining everyday conceptual metaphor. Personification, through which we understand other things as people, is a complex composition achieved via the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor. An illustration is given of the personification of death as a reaper:

First, the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor structures the event of death as the result of an action and adds to the event of death an agent who brings that event about. Second, the PEOPLE ARE PLANTS metaphor can be elaborated via a scenario of cultivation of plants, in which the plants at the end of their life cycle are harvested. The harvest domain of harvesting may contain a reaper.... Third, the action of harvesting is identified as the relevant action in the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor, and the agent of death is identified as the reaper, who is the agent of harvesting in the harvest scenario' (p.75).

In addition to everyday conceptual metaphors, Lakoff and Turner introduce the category of 'image metaphors', which work by mapping the structure of one mental image onto the structure of another. Image structure includes both part-whole structure (e.g., a roof to a house) and attribute structure (e.g., colour and physical shape). Image metaphors are fleeting one-shot image-mappings not involved in daily reasoning but they 'can trigger and reinforce metaphors that map conceptual knowledge and inferential structure' (p.92). An example from Navaho is given: 'My horse with a mane made of short rainbows'. The structure of rainbows with their bands of curved lines is mapped onto arcs of curved hair on the horse's mane. Our evaluation of rainbows as beautiful, awe-inspiring, and larger than life is likewise mapped onto what we know of the horse as beautiful, awe-inspiring, and larger than life. The image-mappings may be conventional, as in the above example, or they may be innovative if new ways of seeing and thinking are explored.

### **0.3 Adopting Lakoff's Theory of Metaphor in Case studies of Translating**



The theory of metaphor discussed in the preceding two sections is interesting to me because of its cognitive and conceptual nature. Instead of referring to Lakoff and Johnson's, and Lakoff and Turner's formulations, I shall attribute both (taken as two parts constituting one theory) to their common author George Lakoff. That concepts are essential to translating has been brought out by Eugene Nida, who thinks that in the process of translating it is the concept which is transferred, the concept acting as the basis for the generation of an utterance in language B (Introduction: 0.1.1). Schemas, the cognitive foundation of conceptual metaphors, have been proved by recent research to bear a relation to the translating process.<sup>46</sup> As discussed in the first section, translating is not only a matter of linguistic transfer but is tied up with relevant aspects of culture. Lakoff stresses coherence between metaphorical systems and cultural experience. General conceptual metaphors are part of the way members of a culture have of conceptualizing their experience. They

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46 Kathleen Lois Dillon in her M.A. thesis entitled 'An Initial Examination of Schema Theory's relationship to the Translation Process' (The University of Texas at Arlington, August 1988), concludes that schema theory is relevant to the translation process with reference to its key points of prior knowledge, new information, learning, and attitude. For instance, one of her findings includes schemas and comprehensibility-- that the receptors would not comprehend the message if the translation did not trigger any of their schemas (p.114).

are alive and powerful because they are so deeply entrenched and automatic so that people of that culture use them unconsciously and effortlessly. It would be interesting to see how coherence may be achieved across language and culture. There is reason to believe that similarities and differences in the underlying concepts of metaphors and the conceptualizing systems between the source and target cultures will facilitate or hinder the translating process. The subtle interplay between different aspects of culture in the formation of metaphorical concepts, the readjustment of cultural values, relevant knowledge and experience in communicating across conceptual systems, and the restructuring of reality to arrive at coherence are problems such a theory will embrace. Moreover the experiential bases of metaphors will prevent the understanding and discussion of metaphors from being abstract and vague and will involve a number of related disciplines, in line with an interdisciplinary approach to translating.

Since the publication of Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By*, it has often been remarked that their theory of everyday metaphor does not bear on poetic metaphors.<sup>47</sup> I started on my research with an intuition that the relation of everyday and poetic metaphors may

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47 For example, Samuel R. Levin's remarks in his *Metaphoric Worlds: Conceptions of a Romantic Nature* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), pp.5-6.



prove to be worth investigating. Ann Thompson and John Thompson, after a series of studies on Shakespearean texts using 'extra-literary' theories of metaphor, expostulate that the great divide assumed to exist between everyday and literary metaphor is highly questionable and that modes of analysis primarily intended for everyday metaphors are surprisingly successful when applied to Shakespeare.<sup>48</sup> Their first chapter is a study on time metaphors in *Troilus and Cressida* based on Lakoff and Johnson's method. The authors are insightful in saying that: 'A virtue of Lakoff and Johnson's approach is the way in which it links literal and metaphorical surface forms by allowing both to be seen as sharing a conceptual base that is metaphorically structured'. (*Shakespeare: Meaning and Metaphor*, p.18) I was more than halfway through my research when I saw the publication of *More than Cool Reason*, which confirmed my earlier intuition and gave me more accurate direction. To be sure Lakoff and Johnson's theory has not fully yielded up its secrets yet. Alicja Pisarska, in her monograph on the translation of metaphors in non-literary texts, expresses her view that Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive approach may open new vistas but it has not yet been explored by translation theorists.<sup>49</sup>

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48 Ann Thompson and John D. Thompson, *Shakespeare: Meaning and Metaphor* (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1987), p.11.

49 See Alicja Pisarska, *Creativity of Translators: The*

In my study I shall adopt the definition of metaphor put forward by Lakoff and Johnson, that the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. Metaphor in the main means metaphorical concept. Although as Lakoff says, via metonymy whereby WORDS STAND FOR THE CONCEPTS THEY EXPRESS, the term 'metaphor' may also denote the words that express a conceptual metaphor, I would as far as possible make it clear when I am referring to the conceptual metaphor's linguistic expression. Many of Lakoff and Johnson's 'literal metaphors' are what people commonly call 'conventional metaphors', some of which originated through catachresis and in the course of time have become lexicalized. To many theorists they are considered dead. But as I.A. Richards warns, the old distinction between dead and living metaphors needs a drastic re-examination. (*The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, pp. 101-102) In most cases I shall not be dealing with these lexicalized metaphors unless particular contexts serve to highlight their underlying concepts and make them active again. On the whole I tend to see the living and dead metaphors not as polarizations but as forming a cline, and the underlying concepts to which they give expression

*Translation of Metaphorical Expressions in Non-literary Texts* (Poznan: Adam Michiewicz University Press, 1989), p.117, note 2. Although I share her view that Lakoff and Johnson's theory may open new vistas in the study of the translation of metaphor, I had embarked on my research long before I had a chance to read her book, which she so generously sent me as a complimentary copy.



may be called upon to shed light on their inter-relations.

My study will focus on metaphor as the master trope of the figurative language. Varieties of the metaphor -- the simile in which the relationship between the two things is stated rather than implied, and personification, whose complex structure is discussed in 0.2.4, will be included.

Following the premise that metaphorical concepts are partially structured, Lakoff and Johnson distinguish between literal and imaginative metaphor. Take for example the structural metaphor THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS, the part of the concept BUILDING used to structure the concept THEORY is the foundation and the outer shell. An expression like 'the *foundation* for your theory' is a literal or conventional metaphor as it reflects the 'used' part of the metaphorical concept. Imaginative metaphors are those that reflect (a) extensions of the used part of a metaphor e.g., 'These facts are the bricks and mortar of my theory', (b) the unused part of the literal metaphor, e.g., 'His theory has thousands of little rooms and long, winding corridors', and (c) novel metaphor, that is, a metaphor as a new way of thinking about something, e.g., 'Classical theories are patriarchs who father many children, most of whom fight incessantly' (*Metaphors We Live By*, pp.52-53). The poetic metaphors I am going to deal with belong to the last three categories and will be examined wherever relevant in the light of such schematization, with all sorts of elaboration and

combination. I shall especially explore the effect of complex metaphors which 'grip us partly because they awake in us the experience and knowledge that form the grounding of those metaphors, partly because they make the coherence of that experience and knowledge resonate, and partly because they lead us to form new coherences in what we know and experience' (*More than Cool Reason*, p.89).

Metaphors enable us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another, each domain being a structured whole. In the following two parts I shall study two basic domains of human experience through examining Chinese translations of metaphors in a corpus of literary works. Part One deals with the domain of 'sickness: one of the four basic states of existence -- birth, age, sickness, and death<sup>50</sup> -- originating from Buddhist terminology but <sup>which</sup> have been absorbed into common Chinese vocabulary and are now firmly entrenched in folk theory. The original text chosen for study is Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. No less an authority than I.A. Richards says, 'The Elizabethans were far more widely skilled in the use of metaphor -- both in utterance and in interpretation -- than we are. A fact which made Shakespeare possible'<sup>51</sup>. That the Shakespearean text,

50 The four states of karma, see *Foxue da cidian* 佛學大辭典 (The Comprehensive Dictionary of Buddhism), edited by Ding Fubao 丁福保 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1984).

51 I. A. Richards, *The philosophy of Rhetoric*, p.94.



which Ann Thompson and John Thompson call 'a powerfully metaphorical text', is conducive to analysis by extra-literary theories of metaphor has been testified by their series of studies mentioned above. The extensive quotations from Shakespeare discussed in *More than Cool Reason* also give support to the same. Among the Shakespearean plays, *Hamlet* has been particularly well-known for its dominant recurrent sickness imagery since Caroline Spurgeon made her pronouncement in the 1930s.<sup>52</sup> Part Two deals with one of the seven basic emotions -- love. Lakoff remarks, 'The seven basic emotions appear to have prototype status and basic-level status, readily recognizable by gestalt perception around the world (*Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, p.38)'. It is more than a matter of coincidence that 'the seven emotions' (*qi qing* 七情) enumerated by the Confucian and the Buddhist canon correspond roughly to their counterpart in the West.<sup>53</sup> The corpus chosen in this case is the love poetry of a twentieth century woman writer, Sylvia Plath, whose complexity and range of feelings through various

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52 C.F.E. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935).

53 I quote from the Confucian canon, 'What are human emotions? Joy, anger, sorrow, fear, love, hate, and desire are the seven emotions which human beings are capable of without the need to learn.' ( *Li Ji* 禮記 (The Book of Rites) vol. 4: chapter 9, 'Li Yun' 禮運, my own translation.) *Foxue da cidian* gives the following list with only one variation: 'joy, anger, sorrow, pleasure, love, hate, and desire are the seven emotions'.

mental stages are especially challenging. An Elizabethan text and a twentieth century text will afford interesting contrast by positing a time axis. As they are not examples of ordinary everyday discourse but are heightened drama in the one and lyrical poetry in the other, more constraints than conceptual differences would affect the translatability of metaphors in these cases. Using a polysystemic approach, I shall examine the network of relations triggered by the poetic metaphor within the literary system as well as the interplay between the various systems in the process of translating.



## PART I

## CHAPTER ONE

A BASIC STATE OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE -- 'SICKNESS'  
EXAMINED

The following case study of the Chinese translations of *Hamlet* is restricted to metaphors in the domain of sickness. A domain of experience, according to Lakoff, is systematically structured. We understand the conceptual network of sickness very often through everyday use of conventional metaphors or basic metaphors, which converge to form cognitive models giving structure to our experience. There is a relatively small number of basic metaphors upon which metaphorical complexes are built and elaborated, taking the form of a variety of linguistic expressions. The translator, as a receptor who shares the language and culture of the Source, has to understand the metaphors of sickness through these basic metaphorical concepts and models. It can be assumed that at the level of the basic metaphors the restructuring of the metaphorical expressions into the target language can be most clearly delineated. We will attempt in this chapter to discover the metaphorical concepts and models of sickness in English and see how these undergo the translating process into Chinese in the next chapter.

As sickness concerns the functioning or rather the malfunctioning of the body and mind, concepts relating to its content and properties are in the majority of cases motivated by bodily experience and are embodied in the



most rudimentary sense.<sup>1</sup> The Renaissance concept of human nature shares with that of modern science the assumption that body and mind are closely related and mutually influential, so that it tends to explain mental conditions in terms of physical causes and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> After examining the close connection between physiology and psychology in the Shakespearean Age, Patrick Cruttwell concludes that this integrated view made it inevitable for the Elizabethan poet to describe states of mind and emotion in physical terms.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly it has also been remarked, supported by case studies, that many Chinese are inclined to somatize their psychological problems and to express them through physiological disorders.<sup>4</sup> Following Lakoff's assumption that basic metaphors remain essentially unchanged through the ages, we shall look at conceptual metaphors and cognitive

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- 1 George Lakoff explains the concept of embodiment in *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things*, 'Cognitive models are embodied, either directly or indirectly by way of systematic links to embodied concepts. A concept is embodied when its content or other properties are motivated by bodily or social experience'. (p.154).
  - 2 Lawrence Babb, 'The physiology and psychology of the Renaissance', in his book *The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951), pp. 1-20.
  - 3 Patrick Cruttwell, 'Physiology and Psychology in Shakespeare's Age', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 12, no.1 (January 1951), 75-89 (p.88).
  - 4 Jen-Yi Wang, 'Psychosomatic Illness in the Chinese Cultural Context', in *The Anthropology of Medicine: From Culture to Method*, edited by Lola Romanucci-Ross (Massachusetts: J. F. Bergin Publisher, 1983), pp.298-318.

models of sickness in contemporary English and move therefrom to the Elizabethan concepts and models, which, as can be shown later, are essentially quite similar.

### 1.1 Metaphorical concepts and cognitive models of sickness as seen in contemporary English

In attempting to construct cognitive models I follow in the main Lakoff's methodology based on everyday use of language and not on learned medical treatises. The results are folk models of conceptualization in contradistinction to scientific or artistic models. Susan Sontag's two penetrating studies, namely, *Illness as Metaphor* and *Aids and Its Metaphors*<sup>5</sup>, prove to be most useful as sources for extracting conceptual metaphors acted out in contemporary Western society. Although her immediate context is American society, Sontag makes comparisons with its European counterparts, and the uses of illness as metaphor highlighted therein are applicable to the West in general. Even when she quotes literary sources, the scenes chosen are based on a widespread attitude so that they have some bearing on the folk theory. No less revealing is Lynn Payer's *Medicine and Culture*, which, though not exclusively on metaphorical concepts, reports on how cultural values shape the concept and treatment of disease in France, West Germany,

5 The editions I shall be quoting are *Illness as Metaphor* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983), first published in 1978, and *Aids and Its Metaphors* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), first published in 1989.



Britain , and the United States, representing the four predominant traditions of Western medicine.<sup>6</sup> Examples are drawn from Sontag and Lynn's works, which mutually illuminate each other. Surveying the field from the inside, so to speak, *Medicines's Metaphors: Messages and Menaces* by a medical doctor Samuel Vaisrub, is perceptive in its critical appraisal of the concealments and revelations of medical metaphor, which the author regards as an intuitive 'flash' that often precedes the birth of a scientific theory.<sup>7</sup> According to Vaisrub, Part I of his book, titled 'Inflow', focuses on nonmedical sources of metaphors that pervade medical terminology, concepts, and practices. To put this in Lakoff's terminology, 'Inflow' deals with metaphors formed by using 'sickness' as the target domain and 'other areas of experience' as the source domain. Part II, 'Outflow', then explores the impact of metaphors formed by using 'sickness' as the source domain and 'other areas of experience' as the target domain. Part I in particular provides many interesting conceptual metaphors with their origins and usages by the medical profession and lay men alike. To supplement the linguistic material provided by the above books, evidence is gleaned from thesauruses and dictionaries, and the current use of idioms and proverbs,

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6 Lynn Payer, *Medicine and Culture: Varieties of Treatment in the United States, England, West Germany, and France* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), first edition: 1988.

7 Samuel Vaisrub, *Medicine's Metaphors: Messages and Menaces* (Oradell, New Jersey: Medical Economics Company, 1977).

the latter of which are regarded by Lakoff and Turner as metaphorical constructions making use of the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor and the GREAT CHAIN OF BEING metaphor (*More Than Cool Reason*, pp.160-213).

The popular understanding of 'sickness', as shown by everyday vocabulary or verbal expressions, stems from its opposite, 'health'. The human physical and mental state is envisaged in terms of a dichotomy, with health as its norm and sickness as departure from the norm. In the following pages 'sickness' will be used interchangeably with 'illness' and 'disease'<sup>8</sup> and will comprise both somatic and mental illness.<sup>9</sup> Health is synonymous with well-being; sickness signifies unwell, and etymologically 'disease' is want of ease and 'patient' means sufferer, and 'ill' of course is the antonym of well. They are all the antithesis of well-being and are regarded as deviant.

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8 *The Shorter Oxford Dictionary* defines 'illness' by 'disease' and vice versa, and 'disease' in terms of dysfunction. Medical anthropologists however differentiate between the two terms. Arthur Kleinman in *Patients and Healers in the context of Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, p.72) says, 'The term illness refers to the psychosocial experience and meaning of perceived disease. Illness includes secondary personal and social responses to a primary malfunctioning (disease) in the individual's physiological or psychological status (or both).' Throughout my discussion 'sickness' is used as a covering term because Shakespeare uses 'sick' and its inflected forms more than the other two.

9 In spite of Thomas S. Szasz's famous thesis that mental illness is not illness in its strict sense of physiological disorder but an act of communication by means of iconic body signs, both the medical profession and the popular imagination still regard mental illness as a kind of illness. See Thomas S. Szasz, *The Myth of Mental Illness: Foundations of a Theory of Personal Conduct* (Frogmore: Paladin, 1972).



Nature in its normal and untainted sense is wholesome and good, and sickness is often described as *unnatural* and *unwholesome*. In the latter instance the conceptualization is projected on the part-whole schema, which also underlies the labelling of the mentally ill as *cracked*. The bodily experience of balance, which is pervasive and basic to the human coherent perception of our world, as elaborated at length by Mark Johnson<sup>10</sup>, also structures our concept of the state of health, so that sickness implies *imbalance*, *disequilibrium*, *excess*, and *out of control*. Our body and mind are often likened to a machine which in normal conditions operates efficiently, when we speak of lungs as a bellows, the liver as a factory, the heart as 'pump' or 'ticker', the brain as a computer and man as an automatic calculator with nerves as circuits.<sup>11</sup>

10 Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp.74-100.

11 See chapter 6, 'Machine', in *Medicine's Metaphors*, pp.35-39. Lakoff and Johnson illustrate the conceptual metaphor 'the mind is a machine' by listing its embodiment in the following sentences: 'We're still trying to *grind out* the solution to this equation. My mind just isn't *operating* today. Boy, the *wheels* are *turning* now! I'm a little *rusty* today. We've been working on this problem all day and now we're *running out of steam*.' See *Metaphors We Live By*, p.27. Lynn Payer comments on the American metaphor 'the body is a machine', especially an automobile. Americans give their body periodic *checkups* to keep it running and go on vacation to *recharge his batteries* (*Medicine and Culture*, pp.148-9). While Vaisrub makes no distinction between British and American English in his study, the everyday language made use of by the other two works is contemporary American English. I draw upon their examples here and elsewhere in my thesis in the belief, supported by learned opinion, that the two varieties have a great deal in common, and that they are now converging rather than growing

Sickness as *disorder, derangement, breakdown*, is a projection of the machine out of working order. Less pervasive than the concept of body as machine and not unconnected with the idea of balance, is the metaphor of the body as a musical instrument, which in sound condition, gives out harmonious music but in sickness is *disharmonious* and *out of tune*. All in all, health is the normal condition in which all is well with the world and everybody carries on his wonted business whereas sickness, spoken of as being '*indisposed*', '*unfit*', or '*disabled*', indicates a temporary *dislocation* from one's usual place in the world<sup>12</sup>.

An interesting mapping of the health-sickness dichotomy onto the up-down image schema gives us an orientational metaphor. The schema arises from our body orientation in space and the up-down orientation represents polar oppositions. Lakoff and Johnson give the following examples to illustrate the metaphorical concept 'health and life are up; sickness and death are down': 'He's at the *peak* of health. Lazarus rose from the dead.

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apart. See especially Robert Ilson, 'British and American English' and Sidney Greenbaum, 'Whose English?' in *The State of the Language*, edited by Christopher Ricks and Leonard Michaels (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). Easy communication among the speakers facilitates an interchange and sharing of basic concepts.

12 This view of sickness as disruption of one's normal duties is supported by the sociologist Talcott Parsons, whose classic definition of the sick role includes exemption from normal social responsibilities. See his book *The Social System* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1952).



He's in top shape. As to his health, he's up there. He fell ill. He's sinking fast. He came down with the flu. His health is declining. He dropped dead.'<sup>13</sup> To the 'sickness is down' pole, one may perhaps add the expression 'below par', which besides pointing to the low position of the health state, reveals at the same time the concept of the body as a commodity, whose current market value is below face value. To come down with a sickness can also be described as to be 'laid low', 'struck down', 'brought down', 'felled', or 'to fall a victim to', all marking a state of being put down by an adversary using physical force. That sickness, an amalgam of undesirable properties as shown in the preceding paragraph, occupies the 'down' pole of the schema is consistent with other fundamental concepts in the English culture, such as 'happy is up; sad is down', 'good is up; bad is down', and 'virtue is up; depravity is down' as formulated by Lakoff and Johnson<sup>14</sup>, showing coherence with cultural values.

The state of being sick or sickness as a disease or ailment is sometimes identified as an entity or substance, giving rise to ontological metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson provide the following examples under 'physical and emotional states are entities within a person': 'He has a pain in his shoulder. Don't give me the flu. My cold has gone from my head to my chest. His

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<sup>13</sup> *Metaphors We Live By*, p.15.

<sup>14</sup> *Metaphors We Live By*, pp.15-17.

pains went away. His depression returned. Hot tea and honey will get rid of your cough.... I've got to shake off this depression-- it keeps hanging on. If you've got a cold, drinking lots of tea will flush it out of your system.'<sup>15</sup> The human imagination has imposed an artificial boundary on the abstract idea sickness, which is envisaged as an object that can be carried around and transmitted from one person to another. It is also seen as a person travelling over or through the human body, attacking the victim and stealing from him his life.

In speaking about the progress of sickness, it is almost impossible to avoid military imagery, which is all-pervasive. This leads us to the SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor, which while envisioning sickness as an entity, is a structural metaphor in the sense that one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another. To adopt Lakoff's schematization, the following ontological correspondences obtain between the concepts of war and sickness:

Source domain: War	Target domain: Sickness
-- War is sickness in action.	
-- The opponents are sickness versus body (and mind).	
-- The strategies used are the growing pattern of the disease and the resistance of the body plus medical treatment if any.	
-- The victory or defeat is the cure or incurable	

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<sup>15</sup> *Metaphors We Live By*, p.50.



outcome of the disease and the recovery or nonrecovery of the body (and mind).

These correspondences constitute the frame of the SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor. Upon this frame epistemic correspondences, that is, correspondences between knowledge about the source domain and corresponding knowledge about the target domain, are brought into play. By carrying over some of our knowledge of the source domain into the target domain, we can highlight specific features of sickness or construct an elaborate conceptual system. It is common knowledge that war is usually believed to be waged by an enemy causing destruction to life and property and general devastation to the country so that the people are mobilized to fight against the invader. Such prototypical properties belonging to 'war' are often enacted by 'sickness', whose action in the human body is spoken of as *invasion* by an enemy, especially from foreign lands, a much dreaded alien 'other'<sup>16</sup>. A profusion of warfare terminology is

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16 Vaisrub devotes the first chapter of his book to 'War' metaphors (*Medicine's Metaphors*, pp.7-11). Susan Sontag has written on military metaphors current in medicine in general and on the language of warfare used by the controlling metaphors in description of cancer in her *Illness as Metaphor* (pp.68-71) and of Aids, in particular infection seen as high-tech warfare, in *Aids and Its Metaphors* (pp.17-22). Payer thinks it is characteristic of the British and Americans to regard disease as invader from outside that could be conquered. The medical aggressiveness in the United States, she feels, reflects an aggressiveness of the American character. See *Medicine and Culture*, pp.118-143.

employed to describe the ensuing attacks and counter-attacks. The disease is said to *infiltrate*, *assault*, *lay siege*, *take over*, and *colonize*. The body *combats* or *fights off* the disease by *putting up defenses*, and assistance may be summoned in the form of the medical practitioner, who comes to the *rescue* of the victim. Treatment may *kill* disease germs or diseased cells and check the *advance* or *onslaught* of the disease, or there may be a *breakthrough* after an *initial confrontation*. Preventive measures such as *inoculation* or educating the public, implementing the still current saying 'prevention is better than cure', are spoken of as *campaigns* launched against the disease. When sickness finally *retreats* or is *extinguished*, health is restored. If the disease is deadly or fatal, the patient succumbs to it and *surrenders* his life. The metaphor is so structured that either one *conquers* the disease or is *vanquished*. Antagonism between sickness and man is emphasized with a sense of urgency and the value judgment of 'sickness is bad' is reinforced.

The concept of 'sickness is bad' in the sense of moral depravity assumes a mythical dimension. That sickness is unnatural and therefore deviates from the goodness of nature, is but a step to having bestowed upon it the status of *evil*. It is a *revenge* of Nature, a *punishment* from God, a *scourge*. The stated purpose of Susan Sontag's two books on illness as metaphor is to demystify the punitive or sentimental fantasies previously concocted about cancer and now on Aids. She is



perceptive in identifying a much feared mysterious and fatal disease as best fits the punitive role and in her observation that societies can only be obsessed with one such disease at a time. Of course cancer and Aids are arch examples of so-called 'evil' diseases; it is not uncommon to attach a moral stigma to other diseases as well. Insanity, for instance, may be regarded by the superstitious as demonic possession, 'possession' being a synonym for this condition, and 'touched' if slightly affected. Calling the mentally ill 'moon-struck' or 'lunatic' betrays a remnant of the belief that the mind is susceptible to astrological influences. The patient takes the blame for the disease he has contracted because he is guilty (according to the 'serves you right' attitude), and the sickness experience becomes a test of faith, from which he may emerge expiated and purified (according to the 'for the good of your soul' attitude).<sup>17</sup> However, as a person of guilt, the patient is often shunned as a polluted and polluting object<sup>18</sup> since the disease, regarded as a scandal and taboo, is feared to be *morally contagious*. The only safe place for the patient is the sanatorium or the asylum. The moral judgment on the individual is extended to the society at

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17 See chapter 9, 'Religion' in *Medicine's Metaphors*, pp.47-49.

18 Susan Sontag quotes with insight the saying 'cleanliness is next to godliness', which is to be taken literally, explicating its underlying meaning of health as virtue (in contemporary society identified with middle-class values) and disease as depravity (See *Aids and Its Metaphors*, p.55).

large by means of the metaphor 'body is society'. The country (nation) or society is perceived to be the body or organism with its ruler as the head (projecting on the part-whole schema). A society not functioning well is likened to a sick person, and it is a commonplace to describe social evils as '*symptoms*' of a *sick society*. It follows that a corrupt or unjust society deserves divine judgment in the form of a plague or epidemic. However there are in existence metaphors that point in a different direction. It has been suggested that the metaphor of the body as a clock and the advent of the modern electronic metaphors of automated machines would dispense with the need for divine surveillance or intervention, since once set in motion the machine can function in the absence of its master.<sup>19</sup> Such metaphors stress the autonomy of the human being and frees man from divine intervention, separating sickness from the issue of moral judgment.

To sum up the most characteristic features of sickness I attempt to construct an overall cognitive model from the metaphors discussed above supplemented by other linguistic data available. As the model has a temporal dimension, encompassing various stages in the progress of sickness (making use of the underlying metaphor SICKNESS IS A JOURNEY projected from the source-path-goal schema) it is presented as a scenario. The

<sup>19</sup> *Medicine's Metaphors*, pp.36-37.



person undergoing the sickness experience will be referred to as P.

1 P feels unwell.

P is partially out of control of his bodily functions.

P suffers.

P gives up normal obligations.

P cannot take care of himself.

2 P seeks medical help.

3(a) P takes the blame for getting sick.

Sickness is something P brings upon himself by his moral conduct, by neglect, or by willing it.

(b) P is not blamed for getting sick.

Sickness is something that happens to him which he has no way of preventing.

4 Sickness transforms one's character (a) for better or (b) for worse:

(a) P is beautiful and interesting.

P undergoes self-transcendence, purification of his soul and enlightenment.

(b) P is weak, ugly and repugnant.

P is dehumanized.

5(a) P co-operates with medical experts and undergoes treatment.

(b) P does not co-operate with medical experts and is forced to have treatment.

6 P lives apart-- isolated or quarantined.

P wants to get well.

P puts up a fight.

P goes through various stages of sickness: initial, intermediate and terminal.

7(a) P returns to the world of the well when recovered.

(b) P goes to the world of the dead (or eternal life) when unable to recover.

I do not claim that this is the only model of sickness in contemporary Western society. However, judging from the convergence of the linguistic evidence, I would suggest that this model is one of the most commonly used. Certain stages in the model, for instance, stages 2 and 5, are optional, for a person may go through the whole process of becoming sick without the benefit of a doctor. Alternative models are incorporated into the overall model when widely different attitudes of considerable importance coexist. 3(a) arises from the myth of sickness as moral censure while 3(b) is the rational attitude prompted by scientific knowledge and common sense. Both attitudes coexist in the same society or even in the same individual, however enlightened he may think himself to be. It is interesting to note that the various versions of Roget's Thesaurus classify Health and Disease under 'Volition: exercise of the will', implying that sickness is failure of the mind, or in other words, the patient wills the disease. The cognitive model represented by 4(b), consistent with the generally accepted evaluation of 'sickness is bad', may be said to be the prototypical model whereas the 'benevolent' view



of sickness for the betterment of one's soul projected onto the sentimental or Romantic picture presented by 4(a) is a variant model restricted to a certain period or a selected class or social group.<sup>20</sup> Commensurate with the modern man's trust of the professional, 5(a) is by far the dominant model, except perhaps for the unwilling mental patient, which is typical of 5(b).<sup>21</sup> Following the general consensus that sickness is bad, it is therefore undesirable, and the sick person, more often than not, wants to get well. Our everyday use of language such as 'get well', 'get better', 'improve', 'pick up', 'take a favourable turn' all lend support to the concept recovery is good. The person recovering from illness is said to 'make a comeback' and 'be himself again', so that he may be reinstated in the normal world of the healthy. If he is dying or euphemized as 'gone', he is envisaged as making a journey to another world, the characteristics of which depend on the viewer's religious beliefs. The positing of such a world is necessary since sickness is regarded as a temporary state from which the sick person

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20 The idea of the 'beneficiary of the soul' is discussed in *Medicine's Metaphors*, pp.48-49. Susan Sontag illustrates with examples how certain diseases like tuberculosis and mental illness are being aestheticized or spiritualized especially by the creative artist (See her *Illness as Metaphor and Aids and Its Metaphors*).

21 Payer characterizes the aggressiveness of American medicine by saying that patients who refuse treatment entirely, even when their case is hopeless, are considered deviant (*Medicine and Culture*, p.133).

has to emerge to return to the world of normal activities.<sup>22</sup>

## 1.2 Concepts of sickness in the Elizabethan age:

### Constants and variants

If one were to traverse time to reach the original receptors of a Shakespearean play one would be confronted with the Elizabethan audience. It would be difficult, if not entirely impossible, to reconstruct in any degree of accuracy the mental state or ways of cognition of a group of people so multifarious in their social and intellectual makeup. Evidence survives to testify that the London playgoers in Shakespearean times comprised all social classes from the gentry and the rich, merchants, scriveners, wholesale dealers and shopkeepers, craftsmen and workers, down to the vagrant and unemployed. According to Andrew Gurr, the London playgoers, of exceptionally high literacy compared to other parts of England, had the mental capacity of memorizing hundreds

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22 David Robinson explains that the religious myth considering death as 'the gateway to eternal life' serves to resolve the life-death contradiction in the case of terminal illness, since the chain of reciprocal transactions between the sick person and others will thus not be broken by death. This allows the terminally ill person to legitimately occupy the status sick. Otherwise he would have to be treated as healthy and be expected to resume normal social duties. See his book *The Process of Becoming Ill* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), pp.99-101.



of lines delivered on stage.<sup>23</sup> True to the Latin origin of the word 'audience', they went to 'hear' plays, and expected to listen to good poetry for the admission price paid. It could be safely assumed that , the degree to which poetry, or for that matter metaphor in poetry, was understood varied across the entire audience from 'learned ears' to the groundlings. *Hamlet* was first staged at the Globe Theatre in about 1600 in broad daylight. As to the play's reception by its contemporary audience, Gurr quotes Antony Scoloker, who said of *Hamlet* in his *Daiphantus* in 1604 that it was able to 'please all', showing that it was enjoyed by every strata of society (*Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, p.121). If Gurr after such thorough research concludes that playgoers 'are the most inconstant, elusive, unfixed element of the Shakespearean performance text' (p.3), how much more so would be each playgoer's response and their collective response, if there is such a thing, which differs with every performance. Rather than dealing with individual playgoer's responses to Shakespeare's metaphors of sickness, which are impossible to recover, I shall attempt to find out, as far as linguistic evidence allow, the general cognitive models and concepts of Elizabethans in the domain of sickness.

As popular concepts do not take root all of a sudden, the period covered here will extend a little before and

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23 See Andrew Gurr's *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) for the social and mental composition of playgoers in London and the evolution of tastes from 1567 to 1642.

beyond the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603) to span the 16th and 17th centuries. Our main concern being the folk theory, and taking proverbs to be reflections of the common beliefs of the time, I shall draw from Morris Palmer Tilley's *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: a collection of the proverbs found in English literature and the dictionaries of the period* as well as R.W. Dent's *Shakespeare's Proverbial Language : An Index*.<sup>24</sup> Other than these contemporary records, linguistic expressions used in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries will be referred to in the light of their currency and popularity. It is interesting to note that Ann and John Thompson constantly emphasize the continuity between the metaphors of Shakespearean drama and those of our contemporary everyday language throughout their studies on the subject. They conclude that Shakespearean metaphor is 'rooted firmly in patterns of everyday thought and speech which have not changed very much between his time and ours' (*Shakespeare: Meaning and Metaphor*, p.207). The frequent and large number of quotations from Shakespearean plays and poems in George Lakoff and Mark

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24 See *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: A collection of the proverbs found in English literature and the dictionaries of the period*, edited by Morris Palmer Tilley (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950), hereafter abbreviated as Tilley. Although Tilley's scope transcends the limited definition of a proverb as a saying of the folk, his collection takes into account the sufficient currency of the saying. R.W. Dent, *Shakespeare's Proverbial Language: An Index* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981) is hereafter abbreviated as Dent.



Turner's book testify to their assumption that basic metaphors have not changed much from the sixteenth century to ours. The opening chapter of *More than Cool Reason* switches at once from *King Lear* to Emily Dickinson's poem to explain the inter-related ordinary metaphorical concepts of 'birth as arrival' and 'death as departure'.<sup>25</sup> The assumptions and conclusions of the above scholars can be borne out in the domain of sickness. The Elizabethan use of language does give support to the view that the Elizabethan metaphorical concepts of sickness are essentially the same as the contemporary ones discussed in the previous section, irrespective of different underlying medical knowledge.

The basic concept of health as norm and sickness as deviance was firmly entrenched in the Elizabethan mind. The use of the prefix 'dis' in *distemper*, *distemperance*, and *distemperature*, the Elizabethan words for sickness, marks their state of departure from *temper*, *temperance*, or *temperature*, the proportionate or balanced combination of bodily humours which make up the normal constitution of health. Grounded in the theory of humours, which we shall further explore in the following chapter, the concept of SICKNESS AS IMBALANCE assumes paramount importance. The Abbess's analysis of the causes of

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25 Lakoff and Turner quote the following lines from *King Lear* (4.4) 'Thou must be patient; we came crying hither;/ Thou know'st the first time that we smell the air/ We waul and cry' to illustrate the metaphor BIRTH IS ARRIVAL, and the 'Death as a coachman' image in Emily Dickinson's poem 'Because I could not stop for Death' to explain the DEATH IS DEPARTURE metaphor (*More than Cool Reason*, pp.1-2).

distemperatures in *The Comedy of Errors*, 5.1.71-82 : sleeps hindered by railing, ill digestions caused by unquiet meals , sports hindered, recreation barred, inducing a man to be moody and melancholy, followed by pale distemperatures-- illustrates the theory that the upset of a balanced life is tantamount to becoming sick. She sums up her diagnosis as follows: 'In food, in sport and life-preserving rest/ To be disturb'd, would mad or man or beast (11.83-84)'.<sup>26</sup> To put it more plainly, ill-regulated living is sickness. Numerous proverbs in Tilley's collection warn of the outcome of too much food and drink: 'Many dishes many diseases' (D360); 'Feed by measure and defy the physician' (M802); 'Much meat much malady' (M829); 'Whatever was the father of a disease an ill diet was the mother' (F93); 'To drink health is to drink sickness' (H292). As 'Diseases are the price of ill pleasures' (Tilley, D359), 'Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise' (Dent, B184). The concept SICKNESS IS INTEMPERANCE is a truism in the Elizabethan age. The Duke of Norfolk in *King Henry the Eighth* pronounces temperance as the only remedy for sickness: 'Ask God for temperance: that's the appliance only/ Which your disease requires (1.1.124)'. And when the doctor tells Cordelia: 'Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;/I doubt not of his temperance (*King Lear* 4.7.23-24), he means that Lear,

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26 All my quotations of Shakespearean plays other than *Hamlet* are from *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, edited by Hardin Craig (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foreman and Co., 1961).



when awakened, will be in a state of sanity or normality, temperance signifying health.

The scenario of a person undergoing the sickness experience remains basically constant from the Elizabethan Age to our own, so that the Elizabethan sick person can be said to share the overall model proposed in the preceding section, but within it, the alternative models vary in their relative position of dominance. The sick person in the Elizabethan age is likewise to be carefully attended since he cannot take care of himself. Owing to his indisposition he is expected to give up his personal and social responsibilities. Falstaff as the original malingerer is described by R.R. Simpson in his *Shakespeare and Medicine*.<sup>27</sup> The prevalent idea of SICKNESS IS INTEMPERANCE puts the blame upon the person for getting sick, not so much by neglect as by excess. The sick person or *patient* in the two senses of 'a person attended by a physician in illness' and a person 'bearing evils with calmness and fortitude' (Schmidt, p.844)<sup>28</sup> besides reiterating the fact that a sick person suffers, conveys the idea that it is normal for the sick to seek medical help and sickness is bad. Shakespeare's *Sonnet 111* plays on the two senses of the patient:

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 27 R. R. Simpson, *Shakespeare and Medicine* (Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1959), p.49 quotes *King Henry IV* (Part 2), 1.2.216-19.

28 Alexander Schmidt, *Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary*, third edition revised and enlarged by Gregor Sarrazin, in two volumes (New York: Dover Publications, 1971), first published in 1902; hereafter abbreviated as Schmidt.

Pity me then, and wish I were renewed,  
 Whilst like a willing patient I will drink  
 potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;  
 No bitterness that I will bitter think,  
 Nor double penance, to correct correction.  
 (11.8-12)<sup>29</sup>

The lines present the image of a patient who co-operates with the physician in undergoing treatment, enduring 'bitterness' willingly,<sup>30</sup> hoping for the renewal wrought by the medicine. There is however a strong hint of spiritual renewal, implying that the person recognizes his spiritual deficiency as the cause (or a cause) of his sickness, so that he will do 'double penance'. He is acting out 3(a) of the model of getting sick in 1.1, taking the blame for bringing upon himself sickness by his moral conduct.

Sickness as punishment from God is hardly surprising in an age where religion penetrates into every aspect of human life. 'Possession' is synonymous with 'madness'. Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, described as being mad, is said to be 'possessed' (3.4.9), and Olivier and the Clown each wishes on different occasions that 'Heaven restore' him (3.4.51 and 4.2.103). That people are spoken of as being visited by a disease ('strangely visited people' in *Macbeth*, 4.3.150) and being visited by heavenly

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29 *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, edited with analytic commentary by Stephen Booth (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977). All sonnets of Shakespeare quoted in this dissertation will be from this edition, hereafter indicated by *Sonnets*.

30 This attitude is in line with the proverb 'Bitter pills (drinks) may have wholesome effects' (varied from 1579, Dent, P327).



judgments ('the sins of my mother should be visited upon me' in *The Merchant of Venice*, 3.4.14), link the ideas behind the two linguistic usages together. SICKNESS AS PUNISHMENT FROM GOD is prevalent in Elizabethan times. The plague, which overshadowed the entire period of Shakespeare's career in the theatre, was equivalent to 'punishment for sin' in the popular imagination.<sup>31</sup> It was so very much feared that measures were designed and strictly enforced to prevent its spread. Friar John, who was entrusted with the letter to Romeo, was unable to deliver it because he and his fellow brother were required by regulation to be isolated and kept indoors, thus precipitating the tragic course of events in *Romeo and Juliet*:

the searchers of the town,  
Suspecting that we both were in a house  
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,  
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;  
(5.2.8-11)

The above incident enacts the scenario of the sick person (and those associated with him) being quarantined until he gets well. The word 'plague' is synonymous with 'pestilence', the latter of which gives rise to 'pestilent', whose figurative meaning is 'injurious to religion, morals, or public peace- 1513' (*OED*); and 'pestilential', meaning 'morally baneful or pernicious -

31 See R. R. Simpson's chapter on 'Shakespeare on Public Health and epidemics', in *Shakespeare and Medicine*, pp.205-13.

1531' (*OED*).<sup>32</sup> The associated meanings of 'plague' play to the full the concept of 'sickness is bad' by adding to it the dimensions of moral and social evil.

The dominance of religion and the not yet fully-fledged science of medicine accounted for the tendency to attribute the cause of disease to divine intervention and to astrological influences. The sun and moon were thought to exert their influences on the presence of diseases.<sup>33</sup> The words 'lunatic' and 'mooned', current in Elizabethan times, point to the belief that the state of insanity was supposed to have recurring periods dependent on the changes of the moon (*OED*, 'lunatic'1; 'mooned'1). The general public tended to distrust the healing power of the medical practitioners as the following proverbs show: 'The physician is more dangerous than the disease' (Tilley, P267a) and 'The remedy is worse than the disease' (Tilley, R68). This tallies with the low opinion of the physician expressed by Shakespeare's contemporary dramatists in their works, in which caricatures of doctors, physicians, apothecaries, mountebanks, and quack-salvers abound. Ben Jonson says of Volpone, the chief character in his play of the same title:

32 Susan Sontag uses the derived forms 'pestilent' and 'pestilential' to illustrate how feelings about evil are projected onto a disease (in this case, 'pestilence'), and the disease (so enriched with meanings) is projected onto the world (*Illness as Metaphor*, p.63). *OED* is used throughout this thesis to refer to *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles 1884-1928*, reissued as *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).

33 See R.R. Simpson, *Shakespeare and Medicine*, pp.211-12.



He has no faith in physic: he does think  
Most of your doctors are the greater danger,  
And worse disease, t'escape. (1.2.320-322)<sup>34</sup>

Webster, in *The Duchess of Malfi*, harps on the greed of physicians and hints at the customary practice of Elizabethan physicians to withdraw from a case as soon as they found it beyond remedy:

physicians thus,  
With their hands full of money, use to give o'er  
Their patients. (3.5.7-9) 35

The physicians were chided in most violent language in his *The White Devil*:

Most corrupted politic hangman!  
You kill without book; but your art to save  
Fails you as oft as great men's needy friends.  
(5.3.21-23)<sup>36</sup>

Unlike his contemporaries, Shakespeare portrayed the doctors who began to appear in his plays about 1600 as competent healers and respectable characters, and paid tribute to the profession as a whole.<sup>37</sup> However, the

34 Ben Jonson, *Volpone, or the Fox*, edited by J. B. Bamforth (Houndmills Basingstoke Hampshire and London: Macmillan Education, 1977), p.21.

35 See John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*, edited by John Russell Brown (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), p.98. Dent records variants of the saying 'Physicians enriched give over their patients' since 1567, showing that the idea is a commonplace of the time (*Shakespeare's Proverbial Language: An Index*, P 274.1) .

36 John Webster, *The White Devil*, edited by Elizabeth M. Brennan (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1966), p.110.

37 See R. R. Simpson's chapter on 'Shakespeare's doctors, apothecaries and quacks' in *Shakespeare and Medicine*, especially pp.70-90.

general public were more inclined to rely on the healing power of God than the expertise of the physician, resulting in an emphasis at variance with our contemporary one. This is understandable as the medical profession was at that time gradually emerging, claiming its independence from the church. The proverbs 'God has provided a remedy for every disease' (Tilley, G189)<sup>38</sup>; 'God heals and the physician has the thanks (takes the fee)' (Tilley, G190); and 'No matter [significance] what's the disease when God is the physician' point to the metaphor God as healer rather than physician as healer. Following this trend of thinking, sickness is looked upon as a test of faith, through which the sick person emerges purified. There were common sayings to the same effect: 'Afflictions are sent us by God for our good' (Dent, A53)<sup>39</sup>; 'The chamber of sickness is the chapel of devotion' (Tilley, C1219); and 'The sickness of the body is the health of the soul' (Tilly, S423). In contrast to our own, sickness as spiritual renewal or purification of the soul (4(a) in 1.2) is therefore a dominant model in Elizabethan times.

Popular concepts of health and sickness, though still basically similar to contemporary ones, were based on folk theories derived from medical doctrines very

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38 Dent quotes the use of sayings analogous to this in Lyly's *Euphues* in 1579 and Shakespeare's *Henry Eighth*, 1.1.123-125.

39 Dent records variants of this saying from 1541 and its use by Shakespeare in his *Othello*, 4.2.47f., *Cymbeline*, 3.6.9-11, and *The Winter's Tale*, 2.1.121f.



different from those of today. Most significant among these is the theory of humours handed down from the Middle Ages. The Elizabethan idea of the Melancholic is deeply entrenched in Renaissance beliefs quite alien to the present century. These will be dealt with in the next chapter when we come to discuss the translating of metaphors in *Hamlet*.

## CHAPTER TWO

TRANSLATING METAPHORS OF SICKNESS IN *HAMLET*

Having examined the basic metaphorical concepts of sickness and their entailments in English folk theory, we shall turn to their linguistic representation as exemplified in *Hamlet*. The Shakespearean metaphors discussed in this chapter are organized in accordance with Lakoff's scheme of metaphorical cognitive models. However, it is characteristic of poetic metaphors to take the composite form, combining in intricate patterns. One cannot therefore examine the basic metaphors one by one without involving others and repetition is unavoidable. Their grouping in the following pages is also arbitrary. This chapter does not aim at an exhaustive treatment of all the sickness metaphors in *Hamlet* but *special* <sup>attention</sup> will be given to *problematic* ones. All quotations of the original text will be from Harold Jenkins's edition of *Hamlet* (London and New York: Methuen, 1982, hereafter abbreviated as Jenkins). The Chinese translation used will be mainly Bian Zhilin's 卞之琳 (1956), which reproduces most sensitively the linguistic nuances of the original, and is especially competent in its handling of the imagery.<sup>1</sup> Other Chinese

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1 Simon S. C. Chau 周兆祥, after a detailed study of six Chinese translations of *Hamlet*, concludes that Bian's translation excels his predecessors in his accurate and imaginative recreation of the Shakespearean text both in form and content. In comparing the translating of imagery by the Chinese translators studied, Chau feels that Bian succeeds best in terms of impact on



translations, namely renderings by Tian Han 田漢 (1922), Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋 (1936), Cao Weifeng 曹風 (1946), Zhu Shenghao 朱生豪 (1947), Lin Tongji 林同濟 (1982), and Sun Dayu 孫大雨 (1991) will be brought in for illustration and comparison wherever relevant (hereafter abbreviated as Tian, Liang, Cao, Zhu, Lin, and Sun).<sup>2</sup>

## 2.1 Sickness is imbalance and unwholesome

Sickness as imbalance and unwholesomeness is fundamental to the Elizabethan concept of health and disease. *Distemper*, used in general for indisposition and mental derangement, occurs twice in *Hamlet*, in 2.2.55 and 3.2.328. Hamlet's exchanges with Guildenstern shortly

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the TL audience. See his *Hanyi Hamuleite yanjiu* 漢譯哈姆雷特研究 (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 1981) pp.408-20 and p.70. Chau's study did not encompass the translations of Lin Tongji (1982) and Sun Dayu (1991). Yet Chau's above conclusion is true even if Lin and Sun are considered as well. See also my discussion of Bian's Translation of *Hamlet* in my book *Bian Zhilin zhuyi yanjiu* 卞之琳著譯研究 (Hong Kong: Department of Chinese, University of Hong Kong, 1989), pp.136-51.

- 2 Translated texts quoted in the dissertation will be referred to by the name of the translator. For full bibliographical information please refer to Appendix I. Of the Chinese translations, Shao Ting's 邵挺 translation (1924), *Tian chou ji* 天仇記 (Shanghai: Commercial Press, Wanyou wenku hanyi shijie mingzhu, no 855, 1930) in *wenyan* (Classical Chinese) and Richard M.W. Ho's 何文匯 Chinese version, *Wangzi fu chou ji* 王子復仇記 (Hong Kong: Xuejin chubanshe, 1979?), an adaptation for performance in 1978, have not been included.

after the play-within-the-play hinge on a number of related concepts.

*Guild.* The King, sir--

*Ham.* Ay, sir, what of him?

*Guild.* Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

*Ham.* With drink, sir?

*Guild.* No, my lord, with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor, for for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into more choler.

( H1 3.2.291-9)

The metaphors used are so intricately related that they have to be understood on three levels: the medical, the spiritual, and the literary. The medical level involves the theory of humours. The concept of balance lies at the heart of the thesis proposed by Empedocles of Agrigentum (504-433 B.C.). He suggested that the world was composed of the four elements: air, fire, water, and earth, which came into being through a combination of the four fundamental qualities: hot, dry, wet, and cold. These were identified with the four bodily humours or fluids. Shontz summarizes their inter-relationship succinctly:

The element of fire is represented by blood and disposes the *sanguine* person to vigorous action and to a hopeful, cheery, and optimistic outlook....The element water appears as phlegm; the *phlegmatic* individual is sluggish, listless, and apathetic, quite the opposite from his sanguine counterpart. The element earth appears as black bile and disposes the person to *melancholia*: depression and brooding. The element air appears as yellow bile and induces a *choleric* temperament, characterized by irascibility. Personality is determined by the relative balance or disequilibrium among the four body fluids; a person exhibits traits imparted by predominating elements in his physical structure.<sup>3</sup>

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3 Franklin C. Shontz, *The Psychological Aspects of*



This theory was incorporated into the Hippocratic Corpus (450-350 B.C.) and developed through Aristotle and Galen of Pergamum (A.D. 130-201), the latter of which combined it with his theory of 'pneuma'--spirits or vapours circulating through the blood--to found his pathology on disorders of warmth, cold, dryness, and moisture. The theory of humours survived fifteen hundred years after Galen and became the ruling medical theory of the Middle Ages. It was accepted by the medical practitioner and laity alike in Shakespeare's day and found expression in current medical beliefs.<sup>4</sup>

The theory of humours is not very much out of sympathy with the folk theory of Chinese medicine. It is traditionally believed by the Chinese that man is influenced in the same way by the same cosmic forces (*qi* 氣 in operation) as the universe, both governed by *dao* 道 or the Way. The complementary forces of *yin* 陰 (female and negative) and *yang* 陽 (male and positive), also manifestations of *qi*, regulate and shape the course of the universe. The principles of *yin* and *yang* together with *wuxing* 五行, the five elements of wood, earth, metal, fire, and water, form the basic frame of reference for

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*Physical Illness and Disability* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1975), p.9. Shontz remarked that the humoral theory presented a fully worked out psychophysiological view of the human organism, which anticipated modern concepts of the physiological milieu.

<sup>4</sup> See R.R. Simpson, *Shakespeare and Medicine*, pp.14-20.

all natural phenomena, including health and disease, functioning in harmony.<sup>5</sup> *Nei Jing* 內經, the classic of Chinese medicine written two thousand years ago, defines health in the following terms: 'When the yin and yang are well-proportioned and balanced, filling the body, and the pulse conditions of the nine positions are even, the man is called a balanced man'.<sup>6</sup> Again, the classic says, 'When the form, the flesh, the blood, and the spirit are in balance, the man is called a balanced man'.<sup>7</sup> In traditional medical thinking, 'a balanced man' is a healthy man. On the other hand, 'when the yin is not checked by the yang, the pulse will run hurriedly and fast, and should the yang intensify, one will become insane; if the yang is not checked by the yin, the five internal organs will experience disorder in their supply of qi, so that the nine body orifices will be blocked'

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5 A succinct account is given in N.H. Van Straten, *Concepts of Health, Disease and Vitality in Traditional Chinese Society: A Psychological Interpretation based on the research materials of George Koeppen* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1983), pp.14- 16.

6 Translated from chapter 62, 'Tiao Jing' 調經 of *Huangdi Nei Jing Su Wen yishi* 黃帝內經素問譯釋, edited by Nanjing Zhongyi Xueyuan (Shanghai: Shanghai kexue jishu chubanshe, 1991), p.420. Other quotations of *Nei Jing Su Wen* are from the same edition. All translations from Chinese texts quoted in this thesis are my own unless otherwise stated. For a thorough study of the interconnections between the theory of *Nei Jing* and traditional Chinese philosophy see Liu Changlin's 劉長林 *Nei Jing de zhexue he zhongyixue de fangfa* 內經的哲學和中醫學的方法 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1982).

7 Translated from chapter 9, 'Zhong shi' 終始 of *Huangdi Nei Jing Ling Shu yishi* 黃帝內經靈樞譯釋, edited by Nanjing Zhongyi Xueyuan Zhongyixi (Shanghai: Shanghai kexue chubanshe, 1986), p.81.



(*Huangdi Nei Jing Su Wen yishi*, Chapter 3, '*Sheng qi tong tian*' 生氣通天, p.24). It is obvious from the above quotations that a balanced state signifies health, and an imbalanced state, sickness. The ideas expounded in *Nei Jing* have endured through the ages to remain as the theoretical basis of Chinese medicine up to the present day. Many of the basic concepts therein have diffused through the practitioners of Chinese medicine to the laymen as common knowledge transmitted from generation to generation.

This folk theory of Chinese medicine has facilitated the transmission of the basic metaphor SICKNESS AS IMBALANCE exemplified in the quoted Shakespearean passage. On the medical level, overactivation of bile (the choleric humour) causes distemper and may be cured by purging the body of the excess humour, usually by blood-letting. However dramatic tension is created by the use of word-play throughout. 'Distemper' may mean (1) ill humour, ill temper; (2) deranged condition of body or mind, illness, disease; and (3) intoxication (Onions, p.62).<sup>8</sup> Guildenstern uses 'distemper' in its first sense in 1.2.93 but Hamlet deliberately understands it in the third sense, hinting at the King's habit of drinking. Bian Zhilin's rendering of 'distempered' into '*bushufu*' 不舒服 (want of comfort, a mild term for not feeling well) allows interpretations of the state of body and mind as a

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8 C.T. Onions, *A Shakespeare Glossary*, second edition, revised (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), hereafter abbreviated as Onions.

result of ill temper, illness, or getting drunk (Bian, p.101). Likewise, 'choler' can be (1) bilious disorder or (2) anger (Onions, p.35). Under the constraint of double entendre, it would not be appropriate to mention the same organ *dan* 膽 (bile), which has no connection with anger in Chinese folk theory but accounts for daringness. Zhu Shenghao replaces the bile with the spleen by making use of the expression '*fā pìqì*' 發脾氣 (spleen ejecting spirit, losing one's temper), which fits the context (Zhu, p.224). However *fāpìqì* is used so automatically and effortlessly by native speakers that neither speakers nor hearers are conscious of the presence of the organ. Bian's attempt of '*ganhuo fāle*' 肝火發了 (liver-fire discharged, flying into a rage) is more in keeping with the folk theory of Chinese medicine which stipulates that overactivation of the element of fire in the liver will result in the patient being irascible. The web of associations is further complicated by Hamlet's hinting at the spiritual level of 'purgation', which is 'purifying the soul from guilt by eliciting confession' (Jenkins, p.306). The underlying concept derives from PURIFYING THE BODY IS PURIFYING THE SOUL bringing in the metaphor SICKNESS AS PURIFICATION. Bian is the only translator who succeeds in hinting at both the medical and the spiritual levels with his '*xiayao ...qingdi ...tade neijie*' 下藥...清滌...他的內結 (prescribe medicine ... to cleanse ... his internal complex, i.e. physiological accumulation of unwanted elements or pent-up feelings). *Qingdi* (to cleanse), owing to its association with the



compound 'dizui' 滌罪 (cleanse or absolve from sin), may call to mind the sense of purifying one's soul. In the following scene when the King is said to be undergoing 'purging of his soul' (3.3.85), Bian (p.109) uses a similar turn of phrase 'ba linghun xidi qingjing' 把靈魂洗滌清淨 (to cleanse the soul clean), at once establishing the connection between the two occurrences. With considerable skill, by using substitution on one occasion and choosing words with the required implications and establishing echoes within the target text on other occasions, Bian has been able to carry over the metaphors, working under the constraints imposed by the medical, the spiritual, and the literary /dramatic demands.

The dichotomy of health being wholesome and sickness, unwholesome, operates on a part-whole image schema. Things that are wholesome and natural are good and those unwholesome and unnatural, bad. Happily for translating, there exists in Chinese the same metaphorical concept of health being wholesome. A common word denoting soundness of body and mind, *jianquan* 健全 (healthy-whole), and by extension, a state of goodness and perfection applied to objects and events, also works on a part-whole image schema.<sup>9</sup> When Hamlet contrasts the excellence of his father with the depravity of his uncle in the closet scene, he is making use of the above cultural value:

Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear

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9 *Xiandai hanyu cidian* 現代漢語詞典 (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1988), revised edition, p.550.

Blasting his wholesome brother.

(H2 3.4.64-5)

The metaphor SICKNESS IS UNWHOLESOME works via the basic metaphor HUMANS ARE PLANTS. Here the structural metaphor of sickness works in the opposite direction. Instead of occupying the target domain, sickness takes up the source domain, and the property relating to sickness is structured onto the human. A SICK HUMAN IS A SICK PLANT ('a mildew'd ear'). Since a sick plant is unwholesome, A SICK HUMAN IS UNWHOLESOME. A sick plant infects a healthy plant growing next to it, causing it to wither ('blasting'). Using the metaphor BROTHERS ARE PLANTS GROWING TOGETHER, the healthy human is infected by the sick brother, impairing the former's health and making him unwholesome as well. Sickness and its properties are applied to two entities: humans and plants. 'Mildew'd ear/ Blasting' refer to plants exclusively and 'brother' refers to human relationship, whereas 'wholesome' may be used to modify both plants and humans and marks the transition from the one kind to the other. The problem in translation centres on solving the semantic incongruity in the choice of words. Liang Shiqiu's anomalous collocations go against the expectancy of his receptors: 'xiangshi yizhi meilande maisui, ba tade jiankangde gege dou haide diaoweile, 像是一枝霉爛的麥穗，把他的健康的哥哥都害得凋萎了' (like a mildew'd ear of wheat, causing his healthy brother to wither) (Liang, p.128). Bian achieves better effect in his rendering 'xiang yige huimaiesui/ sunhai ta jianhaode dixiong' 像一個灰麥穗／損害着它健好的弟兄。 (like a



mildew'd ear of wheat/ damaging its wholesome brother), as *sunhai* and *jianhaode* can collocate with both humans and plants (Bian, p.113). But it still sounds strange to have *huimaisui*'s *dixiong*. In this instance, Lin Tongji's translation (p.100) is most satisfactory: '*jianzhi yiliu maisui touxinlan, cuihuizhe/ xiutingtingde tonggensheng*' 簡直一絡麥穗透心爛，摧毀着／秀挺挺的同根生。(a ear of wheat rot downright to the heart, destroying/ its tall and graceful grown-from-the-same-roots). Upon hearing *tonggensheng*, an average Chinese will call to mind a well-known poem in which the talented poet Cao Zhi 曹植 hints at his persecution by his brother using the metaphor BROTHERS ARE PLANTS GROWING TOGETHER.<sup>10</sup> By making use of an appropriate allusion, Lin ingeniously establishes the BROTHERS ARE PLANTS GROWING TOGETHER metaphor, upon which the success of the SICKNESS IS UNWHOLESOME metaphor depends.

## 2.2 Ontological metaphor

The state of sickness or sickness itself is often thought of as an entity, giving rise to the ontological metaphor. When Claudius asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

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10 Cao Zhi (192-232) was forced by his brother to compose a poem within the time limit of walking seven paces, the failure of which would mean death. Cao succeeded in completing the following poem: '*zhudou ran douji, dou zai fuzhong qi, benshi tong gen sheng, xiang jian he tai ji*' 煮豆燃豆箕，豆在釜中泣，本是同根生，相煎何太急。(One cooked the beans by burning the beanstalk. The beans wept in the cauldron, saying, 'We grow from the same roots. Why do you torture me so relentlessly?')

to find out the cause of Hamlet's distemper he is viewing  
SICKNESS AS A CONTAINER with the cause hidden inside:

Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus  
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.  
(H3 2.2.17-8)

Zhu is able to retain the metaphor in his translation (pp.174-75): *'ta jiu jing youxie shenme mimide xinshi, wei women suo buzhide, yexu yidan gongkai zhihou, women jiu keyi tita xia duizhengde yao'er'* 他究竟有些什麼秘密的心事，爲我們所不知道的，也許一旦公開之後，我們就可以替他下對症的藥餌。 (what exactly are the secret worries in his heart we do not know, which once opened and made public, we could prescribe the medicine in accordance with the illness). Not only does Zhu stress the secret concealed in the heart to be laid open, but he also makes use of the idiom *dui zheng xia yao* 對症下藥 (suit the remedy to the disease), which goes very well in this context. The original lines in fact express a current truism embodied in the Elizabethan proverb: 'A disease known is half cured' (Tilley, D358).

The state of sickness, or broadly speaking, our physical and mental states, are often thought of as being inside us as our heart and brain are. In this case our body is seen as a container. This concept is not peculiar to Western culture. The Chinese saying *'you zhu nei bi xing zhu wai'* 有諸內必形諸外 (what is inside must find expression outside) is to the same effect. Hamlet is



viewing resolution as an entity inside the human body when he says in his soliloquy:

And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought  
(H4 3.1.84-5)

'Sicklied o'er', a Shakespearean invention by using 'sickly' as a verb, carries the sense of 'covered over with a sickly hue' (Onions, p.198). G.R. Hibbard points out that 'cast of thought' meaning 'tinge or shade of melancholy (*OED* "cast" sb. 35)' is 'a usage introduced by Shakespeare in this passage'.<sup>11</sup> Ann and John Thompson elaborate on the embodiment of resolution in their chapter on 'Metaphors of the Human Body and its Parts in *Hamlet*', explaining that 'the natural skin-colour of either the resolute man or of Resolution itself, personified-- presumably red given the "sanguine" basis of resolve in Elizabethan humours theory-- is replaced by pallour [sic], and this testifies to (spiritual) illness' (*Shakespeare, Meaning and Metaphor*, p.107). Bian competently conveys the embodiment of resolution, its native hue being covered with a sickly look: 'jue duan jue xing de bense/ mengshangle canbaide yiceng silüde bingrong' 決斷決行的本色／蒙上了慘白的一層思慮的病容。(the native hue of resolution is covered with a layer of pale sickly thoughtful look ) (p.81). However, lacking the support of

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<sup>11</sup> See *Hamlet*, edited by G.R. Hibbard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, paperback reprint, 1990; first published in 1987), p.241; hereafter abbreviated as Hibbard.

a humours theory in Chinese medical thought, 'canbaide...bingrong' would present a deathly pale look of one seriously ill rather than suggest the disposition opposite to that of the 'sanguine'. Again, 'silüde' would bring to mind one troubled with thoughts rather than the melancholic.

Sickness as an entity can be described<sup>in English</sup> as cold or warm. To speak of the heart being sick is to be 'deeply affected by some strong feelings, as (a) sorrow, (b) longing, (c) envy, (d) repugnance or loathing, producing effects similar or comparable to those of physical ailments' (OED, 'sick' 4a). When Laertes speaks the following line, the sickness in his heart he refers to resulting from the calamity befallen his father and sister amounts to 'faintness, depressed spirits' (Schmidt, p.1056):

It warms the very sickness in my heart

(H5 4.7.54)

Although there is a seemingly equivalent term 'xinbing' 心病 (heart sickness) in Chinese, meaning 'worry and anxiety', it has no connotation of 'depressed spirits' and can in no way be 'warmed up' in the sense of to be delighted (Schmidt, p.1333), as Laertes' heart is by the prospect of avenging on Hamlet.<sup>12</sup> It is not surprising

12 When I use 'translation equivalent' in the thesis, I do not imply 'equivalence' in the sense of complete identity. A translation equivalent simply means a linguistic expression in the target text corresponding in communicative function to the source linguistic expression. It may or may not have an optimal degree



that no translator tries to retain the sick-heart image. The original achieves its effect by the SICKNESS IS COLD and COLD IS UNHAPPY metaphors. Sun chooses to forgo the warming up metaphor and speaks directly of a contrast of gloom and gladness in the heart, making the meaning of the line more explicit: 'wo xintou ben andan,/ jiu biande huanchang' 我心頭本暗淡，／就變得歡暢。(my heart was originally gloomy,/ and has now become happy) (p.185). Bian substitutes the SICKNESS IS COLD metaphor with HEART IS COLD : 'wo liangle banjiede xinli yixiazi rehele' 我涼了半截的心裡一下子熱和了 (my half-cooled heart is all at once warmed up) (p.147). The idiomatic expression *liangle banjie* which, according to the *Xiandai hanyu cidian* (p.631) means 'disheartened or disappointed', conveys the right semantic as well as the emotive meaning. *Liangle* (cooled down) contrasts effectively with *rehe* (warmed up) to signal the new surge of enthusiasm. By the co-presence of *rehele*, the dead metaphor *liangle banjie* is partly resurrected in this context.

Sickness as an entity can be given away. If this sickness is nothing less than the very much feared 'plague', then the gift is tantamount to a curse, as is imported by the threatening remark of Hamlet to Ophelia:

If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague  
for thy dowry: (H6 3.1.136-37)

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of approximation depending on the competence of the translator.

The plague in Elizabethan times carries the senses of 'an affliction, calamity, evil, "scourge", especially a visitation of divine anger or justice, a divine punishment' (*OED*, sb. 2a). We have seen in 1.2 that the word 'plague' is synonymous with 'pestilence', associated with moral and social evil. With such a heavy burden of negative meaning, 'it almost seems that, in some expressions, the word has quite passed into the sense of curse', suggests Schmidt, quoting the above lines from *Hamlet* as an illustration (Schmidt, p.867). The corresponding linguistic expression of 'plague' in Chinese, having developed under a widely different social and historical environment, has not undergone a similar pattern of etymological change and has not gathered into itself similar semantic components. The translators render the term into 'zuzhou' 詛咒 (curse) or 'ezhou' 惡咒 (baneful curse), with no sickness implication at all. For instance, Bian's translation (p.84) goes like this: '*ruguo ni yiding yao chujia, wo jiuba zheyige zuzhou song gei ni dang jiazhuang*' 如果你一定要出嫁，我就把這一個詛咒送給你當嫁裝：(If you must marry, I'll give this curse for your dowry). Owing to the difference in semantic associations, the image of sickness is lost in the target text.

SICKNESS AS AN ORGANISM that grows is inherent in the following lines spoken by Claudius:

Diseases desperate grown  
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,  
Or not at all. (H7 4.3.9-11)



The obvious metaphor of course is DISEASE IS A PERSON, or more appropriately, ONE'S ENEMY IS A DISEASE as the King is referring to Hamlet, whom he plots to eliminate. It is interesting to find that Claudius is echoing a contemporary saying of his time 'A desperate disease must have a desperate cure' (Tilley, D357), which has variant versions since 1539 and is frequently expressed in Shakespearean drama.<sup>13</sup> It can be traced back to the sixth aphorism of Hippocrates: 'For extreme diseases, extreme methods of cure as to restriction are most suitable'.<sup>14</sup> This idea in the form of the precept 'desperate diseases require desperate remedies', according to Lynn Payer, has come down through the ages and is influential in Anglo-American medical practice today (*Medicine and Culture*, p.128). There is no parallel medical precept in Chinese of comparable importance. The Chinese speak of 'du bing du yao yi' 毒病毒藥醫 (a poisonous disease is to be cured by poison), but more in the sense of suiting the remedy to the illness rather than stressing the use of drastic measures. In the absence of similar folklore, the translator must be counted as having acquitted himself well if he makes his translation sound like a precept as Liang does in his epigrammatic statement (p.142): 'xianzheng biyao mengji caineng zhiliao, fouze wuzhi' 險

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13 See Dent, D357, which records its occurrence in Lyly's *Euphues*, 1579 and Nashe's *Christs Tears*, 1573; also in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, 4.1.252; *Romeo and Juliet*, 4.1.68-70; *Macbeth*, 4.3.214f.; and *Coriolanus*, 3.1.154f., 219-21.

14 Quoted in Simpson, *Shakespeare and Medicine*, p.16.

症必要猛劑纔能治療，否則無治。(a desperate disease can only be cured by severe medicine, otherwise there is no cure).

### 2.3 Sickness as corruption

By far the dominant sickness metaphor (or group of metaphors) running throughout the play is SICKNESS AS CORRUPTION, functioning as symbolic systems. 'To corrupt' is taken in the senses of (1) to cause to become rotten, (2) to contaminate, to taint, and (3) to cause to become morally depraved. SICKNESS AS CORRUPTION, occupying the source domain, is being mapped onto human beings and the human world in Denmark. By their constant recurrence these metaphors force themselves on the imagination of the readers and audience alike with the effect that as the play progresses the latter will come to accept their metaphorical implications almost automatically and unconsciously. When the recurrent metaphoric connections have become automatically and effortlessly established, they may become activated by speaking of the source domain alone. The SICKNESS AS CORRUPTION metaphors we are going to discuss will very often entail the basic concepts of SICKNESS IS IMBALANCE, SICKNESS IS UNWHOLESOME, and SICKNESS IS ENTITY.

The corruptive agent may take a number of forms. Canker as 'a worm that destroys buds and leaves' (Onions, p.27) is easily translated as *chong* 蟲 (worm) or more idiomatically to fit the context, as *maochong* 毛蟲 (caterpillar) or *yachong* 蚜蟲 (aphid), substituting the



specific for the generic, as in Laertes' warning to his sister:

The canker galls the infants of the spring  
 Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd,  
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth  
 Contagious blastments are most imminent.  
 (H8 1.3.39-42)

The sentiment conveyed in the original is commonplace enough, a variant on the saying 'The canker soonest eats the fairest rose' (Tilley C56). The description of a natural phenomenon is less mediated by culture, so that one has reason to expect the complex of associated commonplaces to be quite similar in the source and target cultures. The canker as a corruptive agent or destroyer of the beautiful and wholesome, works via the HUMANS ARE PLANTS metaphor, which is also pervasive in Chinese culture. Proverbs featuring the worm as destroyer abound: 'lüye dixia you haichong' 綠葉底下有害蟲 (there are destructive worms under green leaves), 'du zhong er mu zhe, xi da er qiang huai' 蟲聚而木折，隙大而牆壞 (a tree bends when vermin abound, a wall breaks when the crack is big), 'bu pa ying zui niao, zui pa zhu xin chong' 不怕硬嘴鳥，最怕蛀心蟲 (dread not birds with hard beaks but beware of worms that eat to the heart), etc. There is no difficulty in bringing across the symbolic meaning of something good and wholesome being corrupted, made more explicit in 11.41-42. 'Contagious blastments' are disease bringing blights, as diseases in plants are attributable to blasts of foul air (Jenkins, p.200). Translators struggle with the problem of incorporating the components of 'blasts'

and 'disease-bringing' in their rendering. Liang's translation 'chuanrande eji' 傳染的惡疾 (contagious malignant disease) (p.36) leaves out 'blasts' while Zhu's 'shoudao gangfeng de chuida' 受到罡風的吹打 (blown and beaten by strong winds) (p.154) has no indication of disease. Bian attempts to combine the two in an anomalous expression 'fawende fengshuang' 發瘟的風霜 (wind and frost infected with seasonal febrile disease) (p.25). In constructing the implicative complex in this case the translator appears to be constrained by syntactic norms in the target language. Hibbard notes that 'the word *blastment*, not found elsewhere in Shakespeare, seems to be a coinage of his' (Hibbard, p.173). It is very often in linguistic creations of Shakespeare that the translator fails to come up with a satisfactory equivalent. Hibbard also suggests that blasting is associated with the effects of scandal, citing 'A blasting and a scandalous breath' in *Measure for Measure*, 5.1.122. Putting H8 in context, this would refer to the line immediately preceding the quotation: 'Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes' (1.3.38). 'Calumnious strokes' are explicitly translated as 'huibang de zhongshang' 毀謗的中傷 (vilify by slander) by Liang (p.36) and 'feibang daji' 誹謗打擊 (struck by slander) by Bian (p.24) and would have been adequate to open up associations for 'blastment' if one chooses to interpret the metaphor in such a way.

Canker, in *Hamlet*, however is sometimes used in the sense of 'eating, spreading sore or ulcer' (Onions,



p.27). Commentators vary in their interpretation of the word in the following lines:

And is't it not to be damn'd  
To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil? (H9 5.2.68-70)

Both Onions and Schmidt take canker as a worm but Jenkins understands it as 'a spreading sore -- and thus a corruption inherent in our "nature" rather than a grub preying on it' (Jenkins, p.398). Since the Chinese equivalents of the two senses of 'canker' differ completely, translators are forced to choose one of the interpretations. Four of the translators invariably translate 'canker' into 'mao<sub>zei</sub>' 蝨賊, a compound made up of *mao* (an insect destructive of the roots of seedlings) and *zei* (an insect destructive of the stems of seedlings)<sup>15</sup>, but is currently taken to signify a person harmful to the country and people (*Xiandai hanyu cidian*, p.760). Even if the figurative meaning of the compound (a destructive person) appears to have been accepted by common usage in favour of the literal meaning (destructive insects), the morpheme *mao* 蝨 does contain the image of the worm. Sun competently renders 11.69-70 into 'ruo fangzong women renxingde zheyangge maozei/ zaiqu tudu qunlun' 若放縱我們人性的這樣個蝨賊／再去荼毒群倫？ (If I were to indulge this vermin of our nature/ to again afflict the multitude with great suffering) (p.219). His

15 *Ci hai* 辭海 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1948), p.1197. The same edition of *Ci hai* is used in this thesis if not indicated otherwise.

translation of 'evil' into *tudu* is most befitting as the morpheme *du* means poison and reminds the receptor of the spreading corrupting influence. Moreover, the target receptor would be conscious of the set phrase '*tu du sheng ling*' 荼毒生靈 (plunge the people into the depth of suffering), which captures the general intent of the passage. Bian is one of the two translators who takes the other sense of canker: '*wo daogai rang zhege qianghai renxingde duchuang/ jin yi bu wei-fei-zuo-dai ma*' 我倒該讓這個戕害人性的毒瘡進一步爲非作歹嗎? (should I let this malignant sore which destroys human nature/ to further do evil?) (p.170). Again, *wei-fei-zuo-dai* is a set phrase describing evil doings brought about by human agents. To collocate it with a sore<sup>16</sup> is rather odd, and may arouse unexpected response.

In spite of the syntactic anomaly, Bian's translation adds to the cumulative effect of the dominant sickness image of the sore or ulcer. Following Caroline Spurgeon, who first singled out the ulcer or tumour as the dominating sickness image in *Hamlet*, Maurice Charney, in discussing 'The imagery of skin disease and sealing', points out that 'skin disease in *Hamlet* tends to

16 However Caroline F.E. Spurgeon in *Shakespeare's Imagery and what it tells us* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952) says, 'The conception of evil as a tumour or ulcer is also constant, as when Lear turns on Goneril, calling her "a boil, a plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle" in his "corrupted blood" (p.161)'.



emphasize hidden and secret maladies, especially of an ulcerative nature'.<sup>17</sup> The following is a typical example:

This is th'impostume of much wealth and peace,  
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without  
Why the man dies. (H10 4.4.27-9)

Jenkins quotes Randle Cotgrave's *A Dictionary of the French and English Tongues* of 1611 to describe an impostume as 'an inward swelling full of corrupt matter' (Jenkins, p.344). In his longer notes he further explains that an impostume is more properly called a postume, which, according to Andrew Boorde's *The Breviary of Health* (1552, chapter 29), is 'no other thing but a collection or a running together of evil humours' and is classified according to the humour that is the supposed source of corruption (Jenkins, p.528). The etiology of the postume easily lends itself to the metaphor SICKNESS IS CONCEALMENT. First, the postume is a container with evil humours inside, and second, the body is a container with the postume showing partially on the outer skin. Since what is concealed is corrupt matter, SICKNESS IS CONCEALED EVIL. A comparable 'inward swelling full of corrupt matter' in Chinese is *chuang* 瘡 (sore or boil), which is thought to be caused by the accumulation of evil vapours and the clogging of blood, resulting in a collection of pus. When the boil comes to a head and the

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17 See Caroline F.E. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery and what it tells us*, p.316 and Maurice Charney, *Hamlet's Fictions* (New York and London: Routledge, 1988), p.120.

pus runs out, it will be healed as the poison (du 毒) inside has been rid of. Hence the common sayings: 'chuangda chuangxiao, chutou jiuhao' 瘡大瘡小，出頭就好 (no matter how big or small is the boil, it will heal up when it comes to a head) and 'neng yinchu nong de jiushi haoyao' 能引出膿的就是好藥 (that which can bring out the pus is good medicine). Of the seven translations that we have been comparing, four render 'th'impostume' into 'nongchuang' 膿瘡 (running sore) and one into 'nongbao' 膿包 (pustule), all emphasizing that the sore is full of pus (poison or corrupt matter) inside. The other two translators render the malady into 'jidu' 積毒 (accumulated poison) or 'liudu' 流毒 (running poison), reflecting the idea that a boil full of pus is poisonous. I quote Bian's translation (p.129) for illustration:

*daigai shi fuzu he taiping zhangchule nongchuang,  
zai limian kuilan, waibiao shang hai bing bu  
xianchu  
yige ren jiangside zhengxiang.*

大概是富足和太平長出了膿瘡  
在裡面潰爛，外表上並不顯出  
一個人將死的徵象。

(Probably wealth and peace have grown into a running sore,/ That fester inside, while the outside shows no/ Symptoms of a man dying.) Supported by similar popular concepts, SICKNESS AS CONCEALMENT of something deadly poisonous bringing about imminent death is forcefully brought out in the translation.

But when the ulcer or blister is used in a specific social and historical context, as in the following



example, the cultural barrier proves difficult to overcome. When Hamlet chides his mother for her wantonness he is comparing her to a whore:

Such an act  
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,  
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose  
From the fair forehead of an innocent love  
And sets a blister there,

(H11 3.4.40-4)

Here 'blister' refers to the common custom of branding on the forehead with a red-hot iron as punishment inflicted on malefactors, and especially on whores (Hibbard, p.279). There was a similar practice in China of tattooing on the face of a criminal before sending him into exile called *cipei* 刺配, though not on harlots.<sup>18</sup> Therefore if branding on the forehead is described in the translation, it would evoke the association of a malefactor. The difficulty is retaining both the image of the blister and the branding in an acceptable linguistic expression. All available translations, with the exception of Bian, Liang, and Sun, carry over either the sense of a blister or that of branding. Both Liang and Sun supplement their translations with a footnote explaining the custom of branding a whore, but their choice of words is less than desirable. Liang's coinage of an unusual expression '*luoyinde nongbao*' 烙印的膿包 (blister of branding) (p.127) hardly makes sense. Sun's translation of '*luoshang ge nongbao*' 烙上個膿疱 (to brand a

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18 See the entry in *Ci hai* (Shanghai: Shanghai Cishuchubanshe, 1979), p.4218.

blister) (p.135) is, to say the least, still rather strange in collocation. Bian achieves naturalness of expression in his rendering 'luoyinde chuangba' 烙印的瘡疤 (scar of branding) (p.112). *Chuangba* may refer to the scar left by the branding and may be associated with a scab of the sore, so that both senses of branding and a blister are present. By its association with the branding of whores, 'blister' adds to it the sense of moral censure, in sharp contrast with 'rose', the emblem of purity, innocence, and ideal love.

In this connection, Bian captures the right tone of the passage in his translation of 'blurs the grace and blush of modesty' into '*shi xianhuide meimao he xiuyan zhanwule*' 使賢慧的美貌和羞顏沾污了 (cause the beauty and bashful face of feminine virtue be tainted). By rendering 'blurs' into *zhanwule*, Bian introduces the metaphor of taint into the target text. Reuben Brower, in discussing the translation of *Hamlet* in his paper entitled 'Poetic and dramatic design in versions and translations of Shakespeare', remarks as follows: '"Taint", in its Shakespearean associations with melancholy and corruption (cf. *Twelfth Night*, III.iv.13) is allied at once with the disease-rottenness theme that has already been underlined in a dozen or more different expressions'.<sup>19</sup> When the Ghost warns '*Taint not thy mind*' (1.5.85, italics mine), Bian uses the same expression *zhanwu* to translate

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19 See Reuben Brower, *Mirror on Mirror: Translation, imitation, parody* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp.139-58 (p.150).



'taint': '*bie zhanwu nide xinling*' 別沾污你的心靈 (don't taint your mind) (p.37). Likewise, when Hamlet takes note of the corruption of the times in his soliloquy: 'When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out/ *Contagion to this world*' (3.2.380-81, italics mine), Bian renders as follows: '*diyu hui tuchu duqi/ lai zhanwu renshi*' 地獄會吐出毒氣／來沾污人世 (Hell will breathe out poisonous gas/ to taint the world) (p.104). The recurrence of the expression *zhanwu* in close association with the sickness metaphor has the effect of highlighting the symbolic meaning of SICKNESS AS TAIN'T in the human world, reinforcing a major theme in the play.

SICKNESS IS CONCEALMENT symbolized by the ulcer can be further developed to CONCEALED SICKNESS (or FEIGNED HEALTH) IS FALSE APPEARANCE as in Hamlet's admonition to his mother:

Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,  
That not your trespass but my madness speaks,  
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,  
Infects unseen.

(H12 3.4.147-51)

As the skinning and filming<sup>20</sup> of the sore involves little cultural difference, these lines can be equally effective in Bian's translation (pp. 116-7):

*buyao ziji pian ziji, tu yiceng yaogao,  
zhidang da-sheng-ji-hu de shi wode fengbing,  
bushi ni zijide maobing; zhe zhineng shi  
nongchuang*

20 Hibbard notes that the use of 'film' as 'cover over as with membrane' is the earliest instance of this use of 'film' v. cited by OED (p.285).

*jieshang xie fupi, rangta zai limian kuilan,  
andili duhaile quanshen.*

不要自己騙自己，塗一層藥膏，  
只當大聲疾呼的是我的瘋病，  
不是你自己的毛病；這只能使膿瘡  
結上些浮皮，讓它在裡面潰爛，  
暗地裡毒害了全身。

(Don't deceive yourself, by rubbing a layer of ointment, / taking that which cries out loudly to be my madness, / and not your own wrong; this can only make the sore / develop an outer skin, allowing it to fester inside, / secretly poisoning the whole body.) The physiological development of the skin disease is made more explicit in the translation, which amplifies by adding 'the whole body' (1.151) but leaves out 'your soul' (1.147). It seems that when sickness is spoken of in connection with the soul or states of mind, it often meets with translation difficulties.<sup>21</sup> The mapping of the skin and film of the sore onto a covering for a person's fault or weak spot is also current in Chinese. The idiomatic expression *jie ren chuangba* 揭人瘡疤 (to pull the scab right off one's sore) is to touch one's sore spot. The underlying idea of evil engendered by one's wrong-doing spreading unseen will not be missed by the Chinese audience/reader. To bring the sickness image into prominence, Bian chooses to render 'madness' and 'trespass' into *fengbing* and *maobing*, compounds consisting of the morpheme *bing* (sickness), and at the same time identifying Gertrude's fault with

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21 This problem is discussed in my paper written in collaboration with K.L. Kiu, 'Metaphor across language and culture', *Babel: International Journal of Translation*, 33, no.2 (1987), pp.84-106, especially note 12.



sickness. To reinforce the moral tone of Hamlet's speech, Bian elaborates 'speaks' (1.148) into a set phrase *da-sheng-ji-hu*, commonly understood as 'to raise a cry of warning', which is in keeping with the purpose of the prince here.

Sickness as concealed evil is, in the final analysis, a destroyer. The next three examples are interesting in that the translator draws on Chinese traditional medical concepts to interpret the destructive action of the disease as wasting one's *yuanqi* 元氣 (vital spirit), alternatively called *yuanyang* 元陽, as the vital spirit is identifiable with the *yang* principle. The *yuanqi* is the sole formless substance or spirit in which both the universe and man take their form. According to Chinese medical thought, not only is the human body formed by the accumulation of the *qi*, but all physiological and mental activities are produced by its operation. *Qi* is divided into the *xieqi* 邪氣, literally the evil spirit which causes disease or strictly speaking, pathogenic factors, and the *zhengqi* 正氣, the positive or righteous spirit which is the vital spirit responsible for disease-resistance and for keeping the body healthy and sound.<sup>22</sup> It is therefore of primary importance to keep the *yuanqi* intact. To recover from an illness is still spoken of as *fuyuan* 復元, literally, the recovering of the *yuanqi*.

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22 See He Yumin 何裕民 *Zhongyixue daolun* 中醫學導論 (Shanghai: Shanghai zhongyi xueyuan chubanshe, 1987), pp.18-80.

Claudius makes a similar point when he sees Hamlet as a dangerous disease eating into the pith of his life:

But like the owner of a foul disease,  
To keep it from divulging, let it feed  
Even on the pith of life. (H13 4.1.21-23)

SICKNESS AS CONCEALMENT and SICKNESS AS DESTROYER are made plain in the last two lines. The following is Bian's translation (p.121):

*que haoxiang yige haile zangbing de hutuchong,  
shengpa ta luchulai, jiu rang ta cong libian  
haoshile  
shengmingde yuanqi*

卻好像一個害了臟病的糊塗蟲，  
生怕它露出來，就讓它從裡邊耗蝕了  
生命的元氣。

(But like a muddle-headed fellow suffering from a foul disease,/ Fearing its uncovering, let it waste from the inside/ The vital spirit of life). Bian's rendering of 'divulging' ('becoming public', Jenkins, p.335) into *luchulai* (revealing itself) contrasts effectively with the idea of concealment. 'Yuanqi' appears to be a perfect match for 'pith', which, according to Jenkins, means 'vital substance' (p.335).

On a secondary level, the original passage contains the ontological metaphor of sickness as an entity owned by the speaker. Bian and the majority of Chinese translators did not retain this metaphor but simply render it into a straightforward statement of a person suffering from a foul disease. The omission does not seem to arise out of linguistic difficulty as Tian's



translation (p.111) of 'you *huiji de ren*' 有穢疾的人 (a person having a foul disease) is idiomatic and acceptable, although you indicating possession is not as forceful as 'owner' in the original. The decision made by the translators seems to be that they prefer to forgo a less important metaphor in order to highlight the SICKNESS AS CONCEALMENT and SICKNESS AS DESTROYER metaphors.

The next example involves Elizabethan ideas of disease that have now become obsolete:

For goodness, growing to a pleurisy,  
Dies in his own too-much. ...

....  
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh  
That hurts by easing.

(H14 4.7.116-7, 121-2)

'Pleurisy' is glossed as 'excess' by Onions (p.163), and taken as a disease by Schmidt: 'a plethora, redundancy of blood' (p.876); and 'too-much', in the sense of overabundance, is apparently a Shakespearean coinage (Hibbard, p.366). Starting from the premise that health is a condition of balance and equilibrium, SICKNESS IS EXCESS, ultimately bringing on death via SICKNESS IS DESTROYER. What is in excess here however is not any bodily substance but an abstract quality 'goodness', which Bian lucidly renders as '*haopinzhi*' 好品質 (good quality) that '*chongxue er si*' 充血而死 (dies through superfluity of blood). The pathological assumption underlying 'a spendthrift sigh' is explained by Jenkins on p.371: 'the sigh which gives relief is at the same

time *spendthrift* of the life-blood (because sighs were thought to draw blood from the heart)'. Bian's translation (p.150) follows the same idea: 'zhe yige "gai" zi jiuhui xiang luanyongde tanxi, / song yikou shang yixia yuanqi' 這一個"該"字就會像亂用的嘆息，／鬆一口傷一下元氣 (This 'should' is like extravagantly-spent sighs/ With each easing of breath, harming the vital spirit each time). Supplemented by a brief footnote to the effect that according to old theories sighs waste blood and damage the body, Bian orientates his reader to the way in which sighs are thought to be harmful to the vital spirit.

When sickness (poisoning) as a destroyer gains the upper hand, Hamlet in the closing scene says before dying:

The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit.  
(H15 5.2.82)

'O'ercrows', is 'triumphs over (like a victorious cock) (Jenkins, p.415). The SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor is predominant. Sun's translation (p.230) is interesting in at least two ways, 'qiangliede duyao yadaole wode yuanyang' 強烈的毒藥壓倒了我的元陽 (The strong poison overwhelmed my vital spirit). First, he appropriately interprets the spirit that is overpowered by poisoning to the point of death to be the vital spirit which gives support to life, rendering it into *yuanyang*. Second, he substitutes the SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor by one of IMBALANCE, DISEQUILIBRIUM, or INEQUALITY OF FORCE implied by *yadao*, reinforcing the underlying concept of health as



a state of dynamic balance and harmony. In doing so he belongs to the majority of Chinese translators who appear to be reluctant to use the SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor. Of the seven translators under survey, only Liang and Bian present 'poison' or 'poisoning' as an attacking enemy. But even so, in the case of Bian, his translation '*gongde wo sheng bu liao yikou qi*' 攻得我剩不了一口氣 (attacked me to the point that not one single breath is left) might have been prompted by the idiom *yi du gong du* 以毒攻毒 (to combat poison with poison), which again stresses counteracting one toxin with another. Interestingly there is a parallel saying in Elizabethan times, 'One poison expels another' (Dent, P457), echoed by Shakespeare elsewhere,<sup>23</sup> but he has chosen to use the SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor here. The other translators prefer to make a literal statement or turn to alternative ways of conceptualization.

Hamlet and all other major characters dying at the end of the play have run the course of poisoning begun at the poisoning of old Hamlet by Claudius:

And in the porches of my ears did pour  
 The leperous distilment, whose effect  
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
 That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
 The natural gates and alleys of the body,  
 And with a sudden vigour it doth posset  
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
 The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,  
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,

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23 Dent records varied sayings from 1567, and Shakespeare's usage in the following plays: *The Second Part of King Henry IV*, 1.1.137; *Romeo and Juliet*, 1.2.49f.; *Cymbeline*, 1.6.125f.

Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust  
All my smooth body.

(H16 1.5.63-73)

W.H. Clemen is insightful in his observation that 'the picture of the leprous skin disease, which is here -- in the first act -- described by Hamlet's father, has buried itself deep in Hamlet's imagination and continues to lead its subterranean existence, as it were, until it reappears in metaphorical form'.<sup>24</sup> However by our definition of metaphor, the description here, with its emphasis on the leprosy-like skin disease, is constructed of an elaborated SICKNESS AS CORRUPTION metaphor, presenting a most repulsive image. The metaphorical scheme makes use of two image schemas. The first is HUMAN BODY AS LAND. A piece of land with gates and alleys is mapped onto a human body with valves, arteries, and veins. This is an extension of an existing metaphor which has not been spelt out in detail. The second image schema is HUMAN BODY AS TREE. This is rather surrealistic in its operation. Instead of mapping the source domain of tree onto the target domain of human body, the two images are superimposed. 'Barked about' (1.71) is 'covered as with bark', the only use of 'bark' in this sense in Shakespeare (Hibbard, p.189). It is natural for a tree to be covered with bark but it is hideous for the smooth human skin, with an instant eruption, to be covered with a bark-like crust. The metaphor ERUPTION IS BARK is

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24 Wolfgang H. Clemen, *The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery* (London: Methuen, 1966; first published in 1951), p.113.



innovative and affective. Bian has been able to convey the first image schema in the form of '*quanshengde damen xiaojing*' 全身的大門小徑 (big gates and small alleys of the whole body) (p.36). But neither Bian nor the other translators have been able to suggest the leprous development on the skin is bark-like, probably because of the lack of such a verb in Chinese combining both senses of 'to cover with an ugly scab' (Jenkins, p.219) and 'to cover as with bark' (Onions, p.13). The 'leprous distilment' holding 'an enmity with blood of man' hints at poison as an invading army marching through the gates and alleys of the body, breaking down its defences, bringing in the SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor. Again, only a minority of translators, three in this case, choose to retain the metaphor by using '*chou*' 仇 or '*di*' 敵, meaning enemy or enmity. Bian renders it into '*zhe yizhong mafengshi dujing gen rende xueye/ si bu liang li*' 這一種麻瘋式毒精跟人的血液／死不兩立 (This leprosy-like poisonous essence would not coexist with the blood of man even unto death). Sun, too, attempts to highlight the incompatibility of the leperous distilment with human blood by using an idiom (Sun, p.35) '*shuihuo bu xiangrong*' 水火不相容 (the incompatibility of water and fire), emphasizing the opposing qualities of the two elements (incidentally, two of the five elements of *wuxing*). With the introduction of this inimical substance, the 'thin and wholesome blood' (rendered by Sun as '*xibo er jianquande xueye*' 稀薄而健全的血液 thin and wholesome blood) will instantly turn thick and unwholesome, bringing in the SICKNESS IS UNWHOLESOME

metaphor. We have seen how the SICKNESS AS CORRUPTION metaphorical complex in the quoted passage function effectively by extending, innovating existing image schemas and by combining related metaphors.

## 2.4 The body politic

Commenting on the metaphorical significance of the imagery of skin disease in *Hamlet*, Maurice Charney says: 'The secret murder of Hamlet's father is represented as a dermatological event. We have an uneasy symbolic sense of something rotten in the body politic of Denmark, and the events of the play seem to be occurring symbolically within this diseased body of the state'. (*Hamlet's Fictions*, p.124)

The concept of the body politic originates from the theory of humours, which provides the theoretical basis for forming an analogy between the human body and the world in which human beings live. The world is envisaged as a solid body composed of the four elements responsive to human happenings in the following speech of Hamlet to his mother:

Heaven's face does glow  
O'er this solidity and compound mass  
With tristful visage, as against the doom,  
Is thought-sick at the act.  
(H17 3.4.48-51)

Heaven and earth personified with a face and body is 'thought-sick' at the act. The word 'compound' points to



the earth's composition of the four elements, making it vulnerable to physical illness as the body is, 'emphasizing the characteristics of the earth which contrast with its threatened disintegration at doomsday' (Jenkins, p.515). It cannot be expected that this idea is brought out in the Chinese translations, which simply represent 'compound mass' as 'dadi' 大地 (vast land, earth), and 'the doom' as the end of the world with no intimation of the threatened disintegration. To add to this, 'thought-sick', as is usual with expressions linking sickness with states of mind already noted, meets resistance in translating into Chinese. All translators except Lin have failed to suggest the metaphor of sickness. Cao however retains a different sense of 'sick' than is intended in the context, by translating 'thought-sick' into 'zuo'ou' 作嘔 (nauseating) (p.104). Lin's translation (p.99) is remarkable in bringing out a vivid image of sickness:

*zhe xingwei, tian kandao  
dou lianhong. napa zhe jianshi houzai de dadi  
ye bianti fa gaoshao, haoxiang mori yi lin tou,  
tong ding you si tong*

這行爲，天看到  
都臉紅。哪怕這堅實厚載的大地，  
也遍體發高燒，好像末日已臨頭，  
痛定又思痛。

(Heaven upon seeing this act/ Will blush. Even this solid and all-containing earth,/ Will be afflicted with high fever all over the body, as if the end of the world is imminent,/ taking the painful experience to heart.) Lin draws on an idiom *tong ding si tong* 痛定思痛 (to take a

painful experience to heart) to render 'thought-sick'. Incidentally Zhu (p.234) also makes use of a similar expression 'tongxin' 痛心 (pained-heart, distressed) to render the same. But both Lin and Zhu's translations of 'thought-sick' speak nothing of sickness. To compensate this, Lin turns 'tristful visage' into a sick body running a high fever. As a result the metaphor of sickness is not only conveyed but over-emphasized.

The human body, composed of the same elements as the universe, is conceived as a microcosm which mirrors the macrocosm. Disorders in the body reflect or forebode corruption in the state. The expression 'the body politic' referring to the nation as a political entity or the state has long enjoyed currency, and is fundamental to the Elizabethans. E.M.W. Tillyard discusses the correspondences between the body politic and the macrocosm on the one hand and the body politic and the microcosm on the other as seen in the Elizabethan poetic imagination. The Renaissance world picture he presents is an ordered one ranging in a scale of forms of being from God, angels, ether, the stars, the elements to man, animals, plants, and metals.<sup>25</sup>

The Great Chain of Being, according to Lakoff and Turner, still exists today as an unconscious and fundamental cultural model indispensable to our understanding of ourselves, our world, and our language.

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25 E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin books, 1986; first published in 1943).



Lakoff and Turner distinguish between the basic Great Chain and the extended Great Chain. The basic Great Chain -- humans, animals, plants, complex objects, and natural physical things -- concerns the relation of human beings to 'lower' forms of existence. The extended Great Chain concerns the relation of human beings to society, God, and the universe and is central to the Western tradition. The extension of the macrocosm above humans takes various forms in different ages. The cosmos structured by elaborations of Christian theology is as follows: 'At the top was God. Beneath him came Christ, and then the archangels, and then seven levels of angels, with the seraphim at the very top, the cherubim the second, and so on (*More Than Cool Reason*, pp.209-210).' Below this cosmic level, were the pope, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and so on.

It is obvious that this elaboration by Lakoff and Turner varies from Tillyard's Great Chain of Being in Elizabethan times and is radically different from the Chinese world picture. One fundamental difference, as expounded by Frederick Mote, is that the Chinese have never regarded the cosmos and man as the products of a creator external to them.<sup>26</sup> The spontaneously self-generating cosmos formed from a formless substance, *yuanqi*, as discussed in 2.3, is organismic. Contrary to

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26 Frederick W. Mote, 'The Cosmological Gulf Between China and the West', in *Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture*, edited by David C. Buxbaum and Frederick W. Mote (Hong Kong: Cathay Press, 1972), pp.3-21.

a mechanistic concept of the cosmic process, the Chinese envisage 'a cosmic dynamism, fully explicable in terms merely of its internal harmony and the balance among the parts of a conceptually-known but also naturalistically-observed world organism' (Mote, p.14). The concept of the cosmos as a living organism, a macrocosm, in which man, the microcosm, formed of the same substance of the cosmos, is placed at the top of the hierarchy of humans - animals - plants - complex objects, being the most intelligent of all animate and inanimate things, should be congenial to the development of the idea of the body politic. In fact the term *guoti* 國體, literally, state-body, was used in the sense of 'limbs (synecdoche of body) of the state', but has now become obsolete.<sup>27</sup> *Guoti* has now come to signify *guojia tizhi* 國家體制, state as a system (of government). Of course one could argue that the concept of the state as a functioning organism is concealed in the above term, but the image of the human body is rather remote. The contemporary Chinese word for state or country is *guojia* 國家, literally, country-family, suggesting to the popular imagination that the country is an aggregate of families. This is in line with the Confucian ideal, pervasive in Chinese society, that a man is to start from cultivating oneself to regulating his family, governing his country, and finally

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27 *Ci hai* quotes the use of *guoti* in 'Gu Liang Zhuan' 穀梁傳 of *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, in the twenty-fourth year of Duke Zhuang, 'Ministers are the limbs of the state' (p.304). This meaning is no longer given in *Xiandai hanyu cidian*.



bringing peace to the world. In contemporary language use, *shehui* 社會, society (not necessarily organized society in the sense of the body politic) is often viewed as an organism, and society not functioning well is spoken of as a sick society that has to be cured. In our everyday vocabulary we have *shehui bibing* 社會弊病, social ills, and *zhenbian shibi* 針砭時弊, treating with acupuncture (pointing out to the public) social evils. Yet the BODY AS STATE is not systematically developed in contemporary Chinese. There are isolated expressions like *yuanshou* 元首 (literally first head), meaning head of state, and *shounao* 首腦 (literally head and brain), meaning head of government.<sup>28</sup> Since they are unsystematic and isolated, they are not considered living metaphors according to the definition of Lakoff and Johnson (*Metaphors We Live By*, pp.54-5).

The metaphor of BODY AS STATE is not alien to the Shakespearean imagination. Caroline Spurgeon points out that Shakespeare uses it as the central symbol in *Coriolanus*, having adopted the ancient tale describing the working members of the body, the citizens, revolting against the 'idle' belly, the senate, from North's *Plutarch*. Arising from this central theme of the body and sickness, a whole system is being developed. 'The king, statesman, soldier, horse and trumpeter are compared to the head, eye and heart, arm, leg and tongue....The

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28 Bian (p.24) translates 'that body/Whereof he is the head' (1.3.23-4) into *ta shi guojia de shounao* '他是國家的首腦' (he is the head of state).

people are the hands, the tribunes are the "tongues o' the common mouth", or they are the mouths themselves.... Coriolanus is called a diseased limb or a gangrened foot'.<sup>29</sup> Our examples from *Hamlet* show that metaphors applied to the diseased body of the state are most resistant to translating into Chinese. Coming back to the metaphor of the skin disease, we shall look at the line spoken by Horatio after seeing the apparition:

This bodes some strange eruption to our state.  
(H18 1.1.72)

Charney explains: 'In Shakespeare's time "eruption" was already being used in the modern dermatological sense for the breaking out of a rash or pimples on the skin. An eruption of the state is a skin disease of the body politic' (*Hamlet's Fictions*, p.122). None of the Chinese translators retain the skin disease image, but render it into a literal statement, e.g. Bian (p.7): 'zhe kongpa shi yuzhao guojia you feichangde biangu' 這恐怕是預兆國家有非常的變故 (This, I am afraid, forebodes extraordinary disaster). One possible explanation is the problem of collocational anomaly, if one tries to imagine writing 'the country having a skin disease' in Chinese. However it may not be impossible for the Chinese language to

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29 See Caroline Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery and what it tells us*, pp.347-49. She also mentions that 'in the historical plays, the picture of the "infection of the time", the distempered body of the kingdom, full of "rank diseases", is constant' (p.160).



accommodate such innovation, as we have an idiom *chuangyi manmu* 瘡痍滿目 (sores and scars meet the eye), usually used to describe a scene of devastation as an aftermath of war. Another explanation may hinge on interpretation. The translators may have taken 'eruption' to mean 'a breaking forth, a violent commotion' (Schmidt, p.372), which does not imply any sickness image.

Our next example should pose no problem in the recognition of the corruption metaphor:

Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.  
(H19 1.4.90)

In this context, rottenness in the sense of decomposition of matter and corruption of morals is quite obvious. Andrew Gurr, speaking from the performance perspective, sees 'state' as referring to the throne, the 'canopied chair, the "state" which was probably the most-used piece of property in the Elizabethan theatre'.<sup>30</sup> The throne occupied by the king points to the headship of the state. This interpretation finds support in *OED*, 'body politic' 14c which states: 'originally there appears to have been, in this use of "body", a reference to the headship of sovereign'. Gurr goes on to explicate what the 'state' is rotten means: 'There is inward decay in the throne, the king's seat, and consequently in the nation at large' (*Hamlet and the distracted globe*, pp.82-83). Translators have not attempted to carry over the double reference,

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<sup>30</sup> Andrew Gurr, *Hamlet and the distracted globe* (Brighton: Sussex University Press, 1978), p.82.

either because they are unaware of the reference to the 'canopied chair', or because of the difficulty of finding a word in Chinese denoting both the throne and the nation. 'Rottenness' would be somewhat equivalent to 'fubai' 腐敗, as in 'zhengzhi fubai' 政治腐敗, a corrupt government. Only Cao presents the image of putrefaction, juxtaposing it with a descriptive phrase for human affairs: 'fulan jianbuderen de shi' 腐爛見不得人的事, matters rotten and should be hidden from sight (p.33). Most translators prefer the term 'huaishi' 壞事 (bad thing, evil deed), which would not normally suggest the sense of rottenness, although *huai* used in other combinations may convey the sense of deterioration from wholesomeness. Bian's treatment is very interesting: 'danmaide guojiali pa youdian wuqibazao' 丹麥的國家裡怕有點烏七八糟 (I am afraid there is some horrid mess in the state of Denmark) (p.33). The idiomatic expression *wuqibazao* is composed of characters suggesting something filthy, foul, and chaotic, a deviation from normality and order which is clean and good. Bian is therefore using SICKNESS IS TAINT and SICKNESS IS DISORDER to bring out the overall metaphorical complex of corruption.<sup>31</sup> We have discussed earlier that corruption does involve contamination and taint and that SICKNESS IS TAINT is one of the major

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31 I have discussed to some extent Bian's treatment of the 'disease as corruption' imagery in his translation of *Hamlet* in my book *Bian Zhilin zhuyi yanjiu*, pp.141-47. In a personal communication to me in September 1992, Bian said that his translation of H19 was prompted by his intention to strengthen the tone and to keep to the number of metrical feet in the line.



themes of the play. By consistently highlighting SICKNESS IS TAINT, Bian reinforces this theme in his attempt to carry over the SICKNESS IS CORRUPTION metaphor.

## 2.5 Metaphors of madness

Madness as mental illness has a number of metaphors in common with the basic metaphors of sickness, like SICKNESS IS IMBALANCE and DISHARMONY. It was known in Shakespeare's age as melancholia, a malady caused by a melancholic humour spread through the brain. Timothy Bright's *A Treatise of Melancholie*, published in 1586, of which Shakespeare was supposed to have read, has a full classification of madness and recommendations for its treatment.<sup>32</sup> According to Bright, melancholia is caused by 'either a certayne feareful disposition of the mind altered from reason, or else an humour of the body, commonly taken to be the only cause of reason by feare in such sort depraved'.<sup>33</sup> In the metaphors we come across in *Hamlet*, madness as disfunction of the mind or as unreason is most prominent. The conditions of 'particular men' or

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32 The following two articles give textual parallels between Bright's *Treatise* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: 1. Mary Isabelle O'Sullivan, 'Hamlet and Dr Timothy Bright', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 41, no.34 (1926), 667-79; 2. Dover J. Wilson, 'Shakespeare's Knowledge of *A Treatise of Melancholie* by Timothy Bright' as Appendix E in his *What Happens in Hamlet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935).

33 Timothy Bright, *A Treatise of Melancholia*, Imprinted at London by Thomas Vautrollier, dwelling in the Black Friars, 1586, p.2.

individuals described by Hamlet arise from the breaking down of reason:

By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,  
(H20 1.4.27-8)

'Complexion' is 'properly the combination of the four humours (blood, choler, melancholy, phlegm) in a man's bodily constitution; hence the temperament or disposition, considered as determined by which of the four humours was dominant' (Jenkins, p.210). When the dominant humour becomes excessive through 'o'ergrowth', the person is unbalanced and may lead to irrational behaviour. Dover Wilson quotes an extract from Bright's *Treatise of Melancholie* (p.250) parallel to *Hamlet* 1.4.28: 'There keepe the straightest hand, where the lists of reason are most like to be broken through' (*What Happens in Hamlet*, p.311). If one considers health as balance and SICKNESS AS IMBALANCE AND UNREASON, this condition can be considered madness in a broad sense.

Most translators render 'complexion' into '*piqi*' 脾氣 (temper, temperament) or '*qizhi*' 氣質 (temperament, disposition). Lacking the support of a humours theory in Chinese medical thought, the Chinese terms would give no indication of the combination of humours in the human body, though the translation of 'o'ergrowth' may hint at SICKNESS IS IMBALANCE. Interestingly, this o'ergrowth 'breaking down the pales and forts of reason' in the original, is envisaged as the invasion of an army



breaking down the bodily defences (palisaded forts) of reason. As noted above, the Chinese translators are reluctant to use the SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor. Popular choices are '*lixing de fanwei*' 理性的範圍 (the limits of reason) or '*lixing de fanli*' 理性的藩籬 (the fence of reason). One may perhaps detect in the latter a hidden meaning of defence, but the above are commonplace terms for denoting the range and scope in which reason can be circumscribed. Only two translators attempt to bring out an image of fighting, but rather awkwardly. Sun (p.29) adds '*yu baozhai*' 與堡寨 (and fort and stockade) to his *lixing de fanli*. Zhu (p.25) renders the phrase into '*lixing de yueshu he fangwei*' 理性的約束和防衛 (within the bounds and defence of reason). Both Sun and Zhu's translations want naturalness of expression, showing that the image of fort or defence is yoked on to the commonplace expression *lixing de fanli* or *lixing de yueshu* almost by force.

Ophelia's lament on Hamlet's condition is typical of the popular conception of madness as disfunction of the mind:

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,  
sword,  
Th'expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
Th'observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!  
(H21 3.1.152-6)

The brain, being 'the instrument of reason' (A *Treatise of Melancholie*, p.1ja), its disfunction signifies the

breakdown of the whole person. Ann and John Thompson give a penetrating analysis of this passage in terms of the dislocation of the parts of the human organism (Shakespeare, *Meaning and Metaphor*, pp.100-1). Madness is first of all DISFUNCTION and DISLOCATION. The mind is described as being 'o'erthrown'. To o'erthrow is 'to throw down, to defeat, to bring to nothing' (Schmidt, p.794). The mind is an object if it can be thrown down; it is a person, if it can be defeated. The expression makes use of an ontological metaphor and the MADNESS IS WAR metaphor. Furthermore, an orientational metaphor MADNESS IS DOWN is involved and since DOWN IS BAD, MADNESS IS BAD. Consistent with the treatment of SICKNESS IS WAR metaphor by Chinese translators noted above, none of the translators even attempt to hint at such a concept. Most of them render 'o'erthrown' into '*huile*' 毀, destroyed or ruined, or synonyms to that effect. Besides Bian, Zhu (pp.206-7) is the only one who retains the MADNESS IS DOWN metaphor, translating 'o'erthrown' and 'down' (l.156) alike into '*yunluole*' 殞落了 (fall from the sky or outer space, usually spoken of a meteorite). Bian's alternatives (pp.84-5) are '*tandaole*' 坍倒了 (collapse and fall) for 'o'erthrown' and '*daole, quandaole!*' 倒了, 全倒了! (fallen down, completely fallen down!) for 'quite, quite down'. *Tandao* is normally used in connection with a wall or building, and in this context, the mapping of this image schema on a highly accomplished and talented man is quite effective, and the repetition of *dao* in l.156 serves to reinforce the same



idea. However in both instances the verbs are intransitive; no human agent is implied for bringing about the fall as a result of fighting.

More basic metaphors of madness emerge as Ophelia goes on to bewail Hamlet's condition:

Now see that noble and most sovereign reason  
Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh,  
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth  
Blasted with ecstasy. (H22 3.1.159-62)

MADNESS AS DISHARMONY is a basic concept in *Hamlet*. When the prince proves to his mother that he is not mad, he asserts, 'My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time, / And makes as *healthful music*' (3.4.142-43, italics mine). The expression 'out of tune' in H22 was well-established in Elizabethan times, as evidenced by R.W. Dent (T598.1), quoting 'Your braines are *out of tune*' (c1564 *Bugbears*, 1.3.25) and other uses of 'out of tune' in the sixteenth century. The rendering of dislocation of reason as bells out of tune presents little problem, since both MADNESS IS UNREASON and MADNESS IS DISHARMONY are basic concepts shared by the Western and the Chinese medical tradition. Bian's translation (p.85) of the first two lines hit the mark by expressing regret on the loss of harmony:

*rujin que kanzhe ta gaoguiwushangde lizhi*  
*haoxiang yinlingr gaoluanle, shiqule hexie*

如今卻看著他高貴無上的理智  
好像銀鈴兒攪亂了，失去了和諧

(But now seeing his noble and supreme reason/ Like silver bells made confused, lost their harmony). The next two lines bring in MADNESS IS DESTROYER via the HUMANS ARE

PLANTS metaphor. Youth, which is in full flower ('blown'), is a plant, being made to wither ('blasted') by madness ('ecstasy'), the latter of which is viewed as an entity, involving an ontological metaphor. Bian's rendering of '*jiao fengkuang yixiazi cuizhele*' 叫瘋狂一下子摧折了! (destroyed and broken all at once by madness), implies a crushing force by which plants are bent and broken, again stronger and more explicit than the original. Tian's version of these two lines is almost a paraphrase (p.77): '*ta na shui ye bi bu shang de chunhua yiban de muyangr ye bei zhe kou kuangluande feng chui de diaowei bu kan le*' 他那誰也比不上的春花一般的模樣兒也被這口狂亂的風吹的凋萎不堪了 (His unmatched spring-flower like figure also blown withered beyond repair by this wind of madness). The HUMANS AS PLANTS metaphor is made explicit by likening Hamlet to the spring-flower, using a simile, and the MADNESS IS DESTROYER metaphor is made easy to grasp by amplifying 'ecstasy' into the wind of madness and 'blasted' into blown withered beyond repair. An effective rhythm of speech is maintained and the lines are easy to grasp on stage, showing that Tian, as a playwright, adheres to a different set of priorities in his translating.

In the King's eyes, Hamlet's disposition is more complex than Ophelia can fathom:

There's something in his soul  
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,  
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose  
Will be some danger;

(H23 3.1.166-9)



Although 'melancholy' (1.167) here may refer specifically to Hamlet's 'gloomy temper, depression of spirits, sadness' (Schmidt, p.711), it is used in the wider context of the symptoms of one suffering from melancholia or madness as understood by the Elizabethans. Lawrence Babb in his *The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642*, asserts that Shakespeare is using the word 'melancholy' to describe Hamlet's conditions with full consciousness of its medical and psychiatric implications. The 'something in his soul/ O'er which his melancholy sits on brood', he explains, is 'the moody preoccupation with the single idea which is characteristic of the melancholic man'.<sup>34</sup> Lacking such an assumed pathological knowledge and semantic association of words, the Chinese translators' equivalent 'youyu' 憂鬱 (melancholy) cannot conjure up the malady of melancholy. Most interesting in these lines is Shakespeare's extension of the metaphor MELANCHOLY AS MOTHER-BIRD to include the melancholic's preoccupation with the single idea, or his habit 'to ponder' (Schmidt, p.149), as 'to sit on brood'. According to Timothy Bright, 'melancholy breedeth a ielousie of doubt in that they take in deliberation, and causeth them to be the more exact & curious in pondering the very moments of things.... their resolution riseth of long

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34 Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholia in English Literature from 1580 to 1642*, p.107.

deliberation, because of doubt and distrust: which as it is not easily bred, so it is also harde to remoue' (*A Treatise of Melancholie*, p.131). To breed, of course, has the primary sense of, said of a female parent, to cherish (brood) in the womb or egg; to hatch young birds from the egg (*OED*, 'breed'v. 1a), and the figurative sense of to produce. The expression 'to sit on brood' or 'to sit abroad' in earlier English, had long been in use since the thirteenth century to mean hatching, breeding, as a hen on her eggs, and figuratively, to sit brooding (*OED*, 'brood'sb. 2a). However, the words 'melancholy breedeth a ielousie of doubt' would suggest a general picture of melancholy as a female parent, possibly a bird. In Lakoff and Turner's words, our knowledge as given by Bright is a skeletal 'schema' with slots (elements of schema) to be filled in (*More than Cool Reason*, p.61). Shakespeare presents a strong image by filling in the slots with particular details, thus developing the whole scenario of melancholy as a mother-bird sitting on some troubling thought, the hatching of which may be a threatening disaster.<sup>35</sup> The hatching of eggs knows no cultural barrier, and those translators who attempt to retain the metaphor are able to produce something as vivid. Just to give an illustration, Bian renders 1.167 most succinctly: 'jiao tade youyu zai xintou fu wo fu luan' 叫他的憂鬱在心頭伏

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 35 A similar metaphor, this time the mother dove sitting on brood, is used by the Queen to describe Hamlet's fit of madness: 'Anon, as patient as the female dove/ When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,/ His silence will sit drooping (5.1.281-83).'



窩卵 (let his melancholy in his heart lie in the nest to hatch eggs). It is noteworthy that Bian, like most other translators, avoids translating the word 'soul'. Elizabeth Sacks, in her study of Shakespeare's images of pregnancy, makes the point that man's soul was thought to be quick, vital and fertile, congenial to developing the pregnancy metaphor which was popular in Renaissance.<sup>36</sup> There is no such association in the Chinese equivalent of the word 'soul', for which the translators substitute the more popular term 'xin' 心, (heart), the seat of the emotions.

However suspicious Claudius may be of the dangerous outcome of Hamlet's melancholy, the melancholic was usually thought to 'have happy wits and excellent apprehensions'.<sup>37</sup> Polonius' observation of Hamlet's quick wits echoes the common concept of Elizabethan times:

How pregnant  
sometimes his replies are -- a happiness that  
often madness hits on, which reason and sanity  
could not so prosperously be delivered of.  
(H24 2.2. 208-11)

'Pregnant' besides signifying 'expert, clever, ingenious, artful' (Schmidt, p.892), has the meaning of 'pointed, quick-witted' (*OED* a.2 3b), so that as Jenkins comments, 'the latent wordplay comes to the surface in *delivered*

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36 Elizabeth Sacks, *Shakespeare's Images of Pregnancy* (London: Macmillan Press, 1980), p.4.

37 See Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, edited by Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., 1951), p.326.

(p.248)'. The personification of MADNESS AS A PREGNANT WOMAN giving birth to the baby -- quick wit -- implies that MADNESS IS WISDOM. None of the Chinese translators is able to retain the metaphor of pregnancy. Lin's translation (p.55) comes closest to it: 'you shihou ta huali dao bushao hanyi a! fengli zhuang lingji, tuokou sheng miaoqu' 有時候他話裡倒不少涵義啊！瘋裡撞靈機，脫口生妙趣。

(How full of meaning his words sometimes are! Madness hits on quick inspiration, and the mouth gives delivery of wit and humour). However *sheng miaoqu* is an idiomatic expression used so automatically that the image of *sheng* (to give birth) will not surface. In Chinese superstitious and traditional beliefs, a woman giving birth is an unclean and polluting act that may contaminate people coming into contact with it. A pregnant woman as an embodiment of wisdom may be too contrary to the national imagination to be viable!

Lastly, we shall examine MADNESS IS SPLIT/DOUBLE SELF, resulting in social, political, and moral dislocation. Claudius describes Ophelia in the following words:

poor Ophelia  
 Divided from herself and her fair judgment,  
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts;  
 (H25 4.5.84-6)

MADNESS AS UNREASON is retained by all translators, who interpret madness as a loss of 'fair judgment'. Only Cao (p.126) attempts to bring out the image of split in 'nongde tade ren tong ta zhengquede panduanli fenle jia'



弄得她的人同她正確的判斷力分了家 (to cause her person to be divided from her correct judgment). However the idea of the mad person as a double of the sane is not there. It is exactly in this sense that we are to understand Hamlet's apology to Laertes in the final scene:

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,  
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,  
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.  
Who does it then? His madness.  
(5.2.230-3)

The idea is also consistent with our model of sickness in which the sick person relinquishes social and personal responsibilities when he falls sick. When he gets well, he reclaims former roles to regain self.<sup>38</sup> This is exactly what Hamlet is trying to do when he is fully reconciled with himself and the task at hand. Lacking the concept of MADNESS IS DOUBLE/SPLIT SELF, Hamlet's utterance would appear to be a lame excuse.

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38 See Janice M. Morse and Joy L. Johnson, 'Toward a theory of Illness: the illness-constellation model' in *The Illness Experience: Dimensions of Suffering*, edited by Janice M. Morse and Joy L. Johnson (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1991), pp.326, 331.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### CONCLUSION TO PART I

In accordance with our polysystemic approach, translating metaphors occurring in a dramatic text would be subjected to the kind of constraints entailed by the Source and Target literary systems. Translators are well aware of the fact that Shakespeare wrote his plays initially for performance, but the requirement of the very elusive and ill-defined notion of 'performability' is difficult if not impossible to fulfill, given a whole range of almost unknown and uncontrollable factors. None of the translators discussed in the last chapter was commissioned to do a version for a particular production. Liang and Zhu translated *Hamlet* as one of the plays in their individual *Complete Works of Shakespeare*, and Cao did the same except he never completed more than a dozen or so plays. The others also translated the plays for publication. Their consideration of performability was never beyond a general principle of speech rhythm, fluency and effectiveness in delivery, and in some cases, adherence to prosodic requirements and dramatic tension.<sup>1</sup>

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1 The Chinese translators' approaches may be gleaned from the prefaces attached to their translated plays and from the articles they have written on this topic. Simon S.C. Chau, in his study of Chinese translations of *Hamlet*, speaks in very general terms when he discusses the 'dramatic effects' required of the translation: 'the translation must in principle ensure that the audience will be able to listen and understand as easily as those in the Globe Theatre and to retain the dramatic conflicts, suspense,



They have in all practicability proceeded to solve problems mainly of a linguistic nature, and those who succeed, produced a work of literature in its own right. This is in line with the recommendation of Susan Bassnett, who feels that 'the principal problems facing the translator involve close engagement with the text on page and the need to find solutions for a series of problems that are primarily linguistic ones'.<sup>2</sup> The carefully and competently translated text will be used as a blueprint, when occasion arises, for the deployment of director and performers, to suit the specific needs of the cultural milieu of time and space.

A Shakespearean play, however, is both drama and poem. A major constraint of the Shakespearean text is its prosodic form. The majority of translators have rendered the blank verse and the prose passages alike into Chinese prose, without distinction of their dramatic functions. Sun Dayu was the first translator who experimented with approximating the iambic pentameter of the blank verse line with a line of five *dun* 頓 or pauses (each roughly equivalent to a metrical foot) way back in the 1940s with his translation of *King Lear*. Each *dun* consists of two or three syllables in accordance with the natural rhythm of spoken Chinese, while the position of the

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fluency, and tension on stage (*Hanyi Hamuleite yanjiu*, p.70).

2 Susan Bassnett, 'Translating for the Theatre; The Case Against Performability', *TTR (Studies in the Text and its Transformations)*, 4, no.1 (1991), 99-111 (p.111).

stressed syllable may vary within the *dun*. Bian Zhilin followed suit and perfected the skill.<sup>3</sup>

It is true that verse drama as it is, is a novelty in the Chinese theatre. The traditional opera has the major parts sung and some lines spoken mainly in prose.<sup>4</sup> The new '*huaju*' 話劇, or 'speech drama', introduced into China since the May Fourth Literary Movement in the early twentieth century, is modelled on the modern stage play in the West with dialogues in colloquial language. There were sporadic experimentation in writing the poetic drama, for example, Guo Moruo's 郭沫若 pioneering effort in his one-act play 'The Rebirth of the Goddesses', but by far the speech drama was and has remained the dominant form.<sup>5</sup> The theatre-goers attending a Shakespearean

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3 Sun Dayu's translation of *King Lear* was published in 1948. However his translation of *Hamlet*, published in 1991, was made in 1962-3. For a discussion of the treatment of blank verse, see Sun Dayu, '*Sha-shi-bi-ya de xiju shi huaju haishi shiju*' 莎士比亞的戲劇是話劇還是詩劇, *Journal of East China Normal University* (Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences), no.2 (1987), 26-38, and Bian Zhilin's preface to his translation of *Hamlet*.

4 James Liu, in a brief paper entitled *Elizabethan and Yuan: A Brief Comparison of Some Conventions in poetic Drama*, published as China Society Occasional Paper no.8 (London: The China Society, 1955, pp.1-12), points out the similarities between the conventions of Elizabethan and Yuan drama, the latter noted for its literary excellence in Chinese literature. Although verse passages in various metres make up the bulk of the Yuan play, they are designed to be sung and are different from spoken verse.

5 Guo Moruo, '*Nüshen zhi zaisheng*' 女神之再生, in *Nüshen* 女神 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1956; first



performance in Chinese<sup>6</sup> would not normally bring with them expectations of seeing a traditional opera. Instead, after waves of Westernization following the Literary Movement, the audience by and large tend to be more open-minded and more receptive to new forms and new ways of presentation.<sup>7</sup>

Against such a background, the introduction of the spoken verse on stage has had a fairer chance of success.

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published in 1921), pp.2-16. For the influence of the Chinese theatre from the West, see Part IV of Clara Yu Cuadrado's article entitled 'Cross-cultural Currents in the Theatre: China and the West', in *China and the West: Comparative Literature Studies*, edited by William Tay, Ying-hsiung Chou and Heh-hsiang Yuan (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1980), pp. 217-37 (pp. 231-37).

6 Not many records of audiences attending such performances survive. An interesting description in a review of the performance of *Hamlet* in Chinese translation in the wartime capital Chongqing in 1942 by a reporter of the *New York Times* is as follows: 'At 8 the lobby was crowded with young people, soldiers, students, clerks, girls, women with babies and intellectuals in Western attire'. See Brooks Atkinson, 'The Play: "Hamlet", at the Kuo T'ai Theatre in Chungking, Is Not Yet Quite Ready for Broadway', in *The New York Times*, December 18, 1942, p.38. The audience of Shakespearean plays in Chinese, especially those in cosmopolitan cities like Shanghai and Hong Kong, are usually dominated by the literate with a knowledge of the West or the not-so-well educated with an interest in new forms of art or entertainment.

7 Simon S. C. Chau makes the point that the Chinese audience/reader was ready to accept novel Western concepts and artistic expressions when Shakespearean plays were introduced. See his paper 'The Nature and Limitations of Shakespeare Translation' in *China and the West: Comparative Literature Studies*, edited by William Tay et al., pp. 239-50 (p.248).

Moreover, since the lines follow natural speech rhythms, they would not be intrusive to those who do not recognize them as verse. But in the hands of a master, the verse form can be used to dramatic advantage. Bian deploys the metrical feet most effectively in H14: *song yikou/ shang yixia/ yuanqi* (literally, ease each breath/ hurt one time/ vital spirit). The speech rhythm coincides with the rhythm of breathing and should be effective for delivery on stage. On the other hand, to translate the blank verse into a five-*dun* line is to impose a constraint on the process of translating. One of the reasons for Bian's giving up the sense of rottenness in favour of SICKNESS IS TAINT and SICKNESS IS DISORDER in H19 is to fill out the line with the required number of *dun* (see footnote 30 of Chapter 2). He translates 'Something is rotten in the state of Denmark' into *danmaide/ guojiali/ pa youdian/ wuqi/ bazao* (literally, Denmark's/ state inside/ afraid there is a little/ filthy/ chaotic). The end-emphasis of *wuqi/ bazao* in rhythmic speech will allow the idea of corruption to be taken in and pondered upon by the audience. In contrast to Bian's treatment, Cao's translation of the same line is quoted: *zai danmai/ jingnei/ yiding/ youxie/ fulan/ jianbuderen de/ shi* (literally, in Denmark/ within the state/ surely/ there are some/ rotten-/ hidden-from-sight-/ matter). Although Cao's translation is arranged line by line in verse form, it is apparent that he does not adhere to any metrical pattern and the line just quoted, consisting of seven *dun*, is too long and wordy to be effective.



Other constraints on the dramatic text such as dramatic tension sustained by word-play affects the choice and linguistic expression of the metaphors in H1. Unlike lines on a page which may be read and re-read at leisure, dialogue spoken on stage is either understood or missed at one go. We have discussed in 1.2 the remarkable mental capacity of the Elizabethan playgoers--their expectancy to hear poetry and their capacity to memorize long passages of verse. The playgoers of the classical Chinese theatre are not unlike the former in that they go to 'hear' the singing of the songs mostly familiar to them, usually sung by characters in a story well-known to them. However not only is the audience of a Shakespearean play in Chinese likely to be composed of people different from those going to the classical theatre, but also they will 'hear' unfamiliar expressions and novel ideas spoken in a foreign setting. It may be for the reason of reducing communication load that the translated metaphors are at times rendered more explicit than the original to ensure that they would not be overlooked. In H5, 'sickness in my heart' indicates 'heart is sick', which in its context, implies 'heart is cold'. Bian's rendering into 'heart is cold' is more direct and explicit than the original. Likewise, Bian's translations of H12, emphasizing poisoning of 'the whole body' and H22, spelling out 'loss of harmony' and 'destroyed and broken', contribute toward highlighting the metaphors. The use of idioms and set phrases as in Bian's translations of H3, H5, H9, H12, and H19 is

another way of ensuring that the delivery on stage be easily grasped.

In reviewing the metaphors undergoing the translating process, we find that all the basic metaphors common to both English and Chinese language and culture have been successfully carried over:

SICKNESS IS IMBALANCE  
 SICKNESS IS DISEQUILIBRIUM  
 SICKNESS/MADNESS IS DISHARMONY  
 SICKNESS IS PURIFICATION  
 (PURIFYING THE BODY IS PURIFYING THE SOUL)  
 SICKNESS IS UNWHOLESOME  
 (HUMANS ARE PLANTS)  
 SICKNESS IS ENTITY  
 SICKNESS IS CONTAINER  
 SICKNESS IS COLD  
 (COLD IS UNHAPPY)  
 SICKNESS IS CORRUPTION  
 SICKNESS IS CONCEALMENT  
 SICKNESS IS CONCEALED EVIL  
 CONCEALED SICKNESS IS FALSE APPEARANCE  
 SICKNESS IS EXCESS  
 SICKNESS IS TAINT  
 SICKNESS IS DISORDER  
 MADNESS IS UNREASON  
 SICKNESS/MADNESS IS DISFUNCTION  
 SICKNESS/MADNESS IS DISLOCATION  
 SICKNESS/MADNESS IS DESTROYER  
 SICKNESS/MADNESS IS DOWN  
 (DOWN IS BAD)

It is the existence of these common basic metaphors of sickness (structural metaphors using sickness as the target domain and other areas of experience as the source domain) that makes it possible for the target receptors to understand the mappings of these concepts of sickness onto the human world. In Lakoff's terms, the mapping is the formation of structural metaphors in the opposite



direction, namely, using sickness as the source domain and the human world as the target domain. In ordinary language, it gives the symbolic meaning of the literary work. To see the human being or parts of it (for example, human nature) and the state (the body politic) and qualities belonging to it (for example, goodness, wealth and peace) as being sick is to see them as being depraved, unwholesome, and corrupted. However the concept of the body and soul being sick, a commonplace to the Christian mind, is not so in Chinese usage, prompting the translator to leave out the sickness of the 'soul' in H12 and substitute the heart for the soul in H23. In other respects the metaphorical projections work well. In particular, the correspondence in Chinese folk theory, of the sore or boil filled with pus/poison inside, to the dominant ulcer image facilitates the transmission of the all-important corruption metaphorical complex, reinforcing the theme of the play. The orientational metaphor SICKNESS IS DOWN coheres with DOWN IS BAD in both source and target cultures, enabling the metaphors to function. In a broad sense, underlying cultural values in both SL and TL labelling wholesome, natural, balance, equilibrium, harmony, order GOOD and their opposite qualities BAD have been the bedrock supporting the metaphorical opposition of health and sickness.

SICKNESS IS WAR, which is a basic metaphor in English but a non-basic or marginal one in Chinese, appears problematic in transmission. Three of the four following marginal metaphors in source and target languages meet

with resistance in translating:

MADNESS IS PREGNANT WOMAN  
 MADNESS IS WISDOM  
 MADNESS IS SPLIT/DOUBLE SELF  
 MELANCHOLY IS MOTHER-BIRD

Only the last one is carried over.

In cases where SL and TL basic metaphors are similar, problems in translating arise at times because of a difference in medical knowledge that has found its way to folk theory. The lack of a theory of humours in Chinese medicine accounts for the difficulties in translating 'choler' in H1, 'complexion' in H20, and the failure to suggest a complexion of 'pallor' as opposed to 'sanguine' in translating H4. The gap in pathological knowledge of the English malady called 'melancholia' prevents the Chinese receptors from an accurate understanding of the condition when they hear or read the term *youyu*, which is hardly its equivalent.

The existence of the basic Great Chain of Being as an unconscious cultural model in English and Chinese has made it possible for the HUMANS ARE PLANTS metaphor to function. But its further elaboration of BROTHERS ARE PLANTS GROWING TOGETHER in H2 has to be solved, and in this instance, ingeniously by evoking this association from an appropriate literary allusion. Varying semantic associations of a word, 'plague', for example, developed under different social and historical circumstances, have constrained the carrying over of the metaphor of sickness in H6. A social custom not found in the target culture, as in the branding of whores associated with the



word 'blister', hinders the transmission of the sickness image in H11. Very often the existence or non-existence of a lexical item in the target language system will influence the translator's choice. For instance, the word-formation of *maozi*, with the image of the destructive worm concealed, has predisposed it as a preferred equivalent for 'canker' in H9. On the other hand, the lack of a word in Chinese denoting both throne and nation, limits the projection of the sickness image on the body politic in H19. Likewise, the non-existence of a verb in Chinese signifying at the same time the two senses of 'to bark about' has perhaps prevented the carrying over of the bold metaphor in H16.

Not less challenging to the translator is Shakespeare's creativity in his use of language. Alfred Hart, in surveying the growth of Shakespeare's vocabulary, mentions that the compilers of the *Oxford English Dictionary* find that Shakespeare 'was the first in our literature to use about ten per cent. of the main words present in his works, and ascribe over three-fifths of the combined words to his own invention'.<sup>8</sup> According to Hart's estimation, *Hamlet* is remarkable in that it contains the largest inflow of fresh words into Shakespeare's vocabulary (p.249). The fact that 'barked about' is the only use of 'bark' in this sense in Shakespeare (Hibbard, p.189) and 'lazar-like' is not

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8 Alfred Hart, 'The Growth of Shakespeare's Vocabulary', *The Review of English Studies*, 19, no.75 (July 1943), 242-54 (p.243).

found in such combination in other plays or poems of Shakespeare,<sup>9</sup> has imposed a further stylistic requirement on the translator in reconstructing the metaphorical complex in H16. We have also seen how Shakespeare's invention of 'sicklied o'er' and his introduction of 'cast of thought' in H4 are difficult to match in equally happy and innovative linguistic expressions in Chinese. All other factors being equal, collocational anomaly, for example, in H2 and H9, will affect adversely the response of the receptors. Conversely, one may also argue that this collocational clash is effective in drawing attention to the metaphors.

In the Chinese conception of the Great Chain of Being, the human being is considered the most intelligent of all animate and inanimate beings. The distinguishing quality of humans is their faculty of reason. All translators have simply rendered 'divided from herself and her fair judgment' in H25 into loss of fair judgment, ignoring the idea of a double or split self. Although the macrocosm in the form of the state or society is often envisaged as an organism, the lack of a systematic development of the BODY AS STATE metaphor makes it difficult for the translating of sickness metaphors in H18 and H19.

Chinese cosmology, which sees the cosmos (the macrocosm) and man (the microcosm) as living organisms

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9 Alfred Hart, 'Vocabularies of Shakespeare's Plays', *The Review of English Studies*, 19, no.74 (April 1943), 128-40 (p.130).



and not as machines, is in the final analysis, responsible for the major difference in the metaphors of sickness in the English and Chinese cultures. Hamlet, in his love-letter to Ophelia, writes 'whilst this *machine* is to him' (2.2.122-23), calling his body a machine. Jenkins's footnote on this line elaborates on the mechanistic concept: 'The Elizabethans thought of nature in general and the human body in particular as a mechanism. The word *machine*, without the prosaic associations it has acquired in a later age, refers admiringly to a complicated structure composed of many parts. Bright, e.g., thinks of the body as an "engine" stirred into action by the soul' (p.243). Quite contrary to the mechanistic view, traditional Chinese medicine sees man as part of nature, and instead of studying the human body in isolation, places it in the overall operation and the wider context of the dynamic equilibrium of nature.<sup>10</sup> An important feature of traditional Chinese medicine is its 'emphasis on the practical application of holistic concept of correlation between man and nature'.<sup>11</sup> Sickness, rather than

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10 This idea is succinctly summed up by Ren Yingqiu 任應秋 in his Preface to Liu Changlin's *Nei Jing de zhexue he zhongyixue de fangfa*, pp.v-vi.

11 Wu Jieping 吳階平 and Chen Keji's 陳可冀 joint article entitled 'Clinical features and investigation of traditional Chinese medicine' lists the above as the first clinical feature of traditional Chinese medicine. See *Chinese Medical Journal*, 106, no.6 (June 1993), 403-5 (p.403).

envisaged as an enemy from outside, is thought of as an imbalance or disharmony of the dynamics within the human body or of its relation to nature. Although there are a small number of words in use in traditional medicine that sound like military terminology, they are actually less militant than they appear to be. 'Xi' 襲, to attack, is also used in a number of contexts meaning to interfere or to inherit (*Huangdi Nei Jing Cidian*).<sup>12</sup> 'Bo' 搏, 1. to fight or to compete, also means 2. to unite, 3. strong and powerful, 4. to be held up (*Huangdi Nei Jing Cidian*, p.869). Among such terms, 'sheng' 勝, occurring most frequently, is not used in the current sense of victory in battle, but in the following senses: 1. in full force, 2. in excess, 3. to promote, 4. to check, 5. to damage (*Huangdi Nei Jing Cidian*, p.628). It is quite obvious that the struggle between health and sickness is not an arms fight but a promoting or checking of forces, as is said of the interaction of the *wuxing* or *ying* and *yang*. When there is an imbalance one has to support the weak side or inhibit the strong side, in order to maintain a balance of influence or a state of equilibrium.<sup>13</sup> The way

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12 *Huangdi Nei Jing Cidian* 黃帝內經詞典, compiled by Guo Aichun 郭霽春 and Li Siyuan 李思源 (Tianjin: Tianjin Kexue chubanshe, 1991), p.747.

13 See Wu Jieping and Chen Keji's discussion under the second clinical feature of traditional Chinese medicine: 'emphasis on the practical application of homeostatic concept of relative balance of Yin and yang' ('Clinical features and investigation of traditional Chinese medicine', p.404).



to counteract a disease is to regain a balance of power by regulating the excessive elements and restoring or strengthening the *yuanqi* of the body, as indicated by the idiom 'guben peiyuan' 固本培元, consolidating the constitution and fostering the *yuanqi*.

Traditional Chinese medicine has more in common with the Elizabethan concept of health as balance of the four humours and temperance in living habits than the more aggressive modern attitude in Western medicine. Although SICKNESS IS WAR was a basic concept in Elizabethan times, and military terms like *attack*, *invade*, and *invasion* were used of sickness (OED, 'attack' v.5, 'invade' v.2b, 'invasion' 1b) there was not such a profusion of military terminology as in contemporary English.<sup>14</sup> Yet holistic medicine treating the whole man, and man as an integral part of nature, as traditional Chinese medicine is, cannot be reconciled with the mechanical model.<sup>15</sup> There

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14 Paul Hodgkin, a medical practitioner and university lecturer, in discussing the predominance of the 'medicine is war' metaphor, regrets that 'the metaphors underlying our language create a subtle pressure that is perhaps part of the reason that we find it so difficult to think of people as wholes, as having a reality much greater than the sum of their organs, diseases or economic value'. See his article entitled 'Medicine is war: and other medical metaphors', *British Medical Journal*, 291, no.6511 (21-28 December, 1985), 1820-21 (p.1821).

15 Vaisrub comments on the reductionist implications of the machine metaphor, including the Cartesian clock, in his concluding chapter to his *Medicine's Metaphors*: 'Holistic medicine is based on the psychosomatic concept of body-mind interaction, treating the whole man. It cannot be reconciled with the mechanical model (p.121)'.

is no saying in Chinese parallel to the dominant aggressive concept that has been handed down through the ages from Hippocrates: 'A desperate disease must have a desperate cure' inherent in H7. This also accounts for the substitution of the concept of *yuanqi* in H13, H14, H15 and the reluctance in translating the metaphor SICKNESS IS WAR in H15, H16, H20 and H21.

In the case of the marginal metaphors, they have failed to be transmitted when their underlying cultural values are at variance with those of the TL as in MADNESS IS PREGNANT WOMAN carrying WISDOM (H24). But MADNESS IS MOTHER-BIRD meets with better luck, because the shared experience of a bird hatching eggs is easily understood in H23 without being marred by cultural prejudice.

By extending and combining existing metaphors, Shakespeare has crystallized metaphors into strong images and built up intricate metaphorical complexes that are highly effective. The linguistic expression of these poetic metaphors together with their network of entailments have made translating most challenging. We have seen the metaphors in H1 operate on three levels and those in H16 create a surrealist scenario by superimposing image schemas and combining basic metaphors. Translators achieve different degrees of success depending on their artistic skill and resourcefulness in surmounting the various barriers within and where the polysystems intersect.



## PART II

## CHAPTER FOUR

## A BASIC HUMAN EMOTION -- 'LOVE' EXAMINED

Our second case study concerns translating metaphors of love in the poetry of the American poet Sylvia Plath (1932-1963). As her poetry was written in the twentieth century and has been translated for our contemporary Chinese readers, the time factor is not so much a problem in transmission as that of space involving diverse cultural orientations. Love is recognized to be 'without question the major preoccupation of Americans', yet it may signify different things to different people. Love may designate a feeling, an attitude, a set of behaviour, a judgment, or an emotion.<sup>1</sup> Bernard Murstein has shown that feelings are too unstable an index of love, attitude and behaviour unreliable as criteria, and judgment is a conscious decision that may influence one's behaviour. Each of the above alone indicates one aspect of our experience of love, which may be more fully represented as an emotion having a complex structure. Lakoff calls love one of the seven basic emotions (see

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1 The above statement is given in the opening sentence of Bernard I. Murstein's contribution, Chapter two: 'A Taxonomy of Love', to *The Psychology of Love*, edited by Robert J. Sternberg and Michael L. Barnes (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp.13-37. This comprehensive book on contemporary theories of love is hereafter referred to by its title alone. Zick Rubin, in his preface to the volume, calls attention to the lack of a common vocabulary used by researchers on love, while Murstein evaluates the different modes of expression of love.



the last section of the Introduction of this dissertation) and Robert C. Solomon studies love as an emotion in his book *Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor*. Solomon describes emotions as 'intelligent constructions, structured by concepts and judgments that we learn in a particular culture, through which we give our experience some shape and meaning'.<sup>2</sup> He argues that emotions are culture-specific, and goes on to assert: 'what emotions one has or can have depend in part upon the particular culture one belongs to. Having a certain emotion is restricted to those who share certain concepts, or speak a certain language, and make certain kinds of judgments about themselves and the world.' (*Love: Emotion, Myth, and Metaphor*, p.xxvii) The emotion of love is, according to him, a cultural artifact.

Our concern here is with the variety of love generally spoken of as romantic love. Elaine Hatfield differentiates between two basic types of love: romantic or passionate versus conjugal or companionate love.<sup>3</sup> She defines romantic love as follows: 'A state of intense longing for union with another. Reciprocated love (union with the other) is associated with fulfillment and ecstasy. Unrequited love (separation) with emptiness, anxiety, or despair. A state of profound physiological

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2 Robert C. Solomon, *Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, 1981), pp. xxvi-xxvii.

3 Elaine Hatfield, 'Passionate and Companionate Love', in *The Psychology of Love*, pp.191-217.

arousal'.<sup>4</sup> Approaching the emotion from the social angle, James R. Averill argues that 'love is a complex syndrome composed of many component processes...determined by biological, psychological, and social factors, but no component by itself is a necessary or sufficient condition for the entire syndrome. Moreover, the way the components are organized into a coherent whole is determined to a large extent by paradigms, of which the romantic ideal is one illustration'.<sup>5</sup> Selecting some of the components for discussion, namely, idealization of the loved one, suddenness of onset, physiological arousal, and commitment, he reiterates that all of these are heavily and fundamentally influenced by social factors.

Viewed from the cultural perspective, the twentieth-century North American vision of romantic love described by Nathaniel Branden is nothing short of a kind of faith in a person's right to complete happiness here on earth, which would have been regarded as extraordinary in the context of human history. To quote in full, Branden explains that Americans have the following assumptions:

These include that the two people who will share their

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4 Quoted in 'Passionate and Companionate Love' (p.191) from E. Hatfield and G.W. Walster, *A New Look at Love* (Lanham, MA: University Press of America, 1978), p.9.

5 James R. Averill, 'The Social Construction of Emotion: With Special Reference to Love', in *The Social Construction of the Person*, edited by Kenneth J. Gergen and Keith E. Davis (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1985), pp.89-109 (p.94).



lives will choose each other, freely and voluntarily, and that no one, not family or friends, church or state, can or should make that choice for them; that they will choose on the basis of love rather than on the basis of social, family, or financial considerations; that it very much matters which human beings they choose and, in this connection, that the differences between one human being and another are immensely important; that they can hope and expect to derive happiness from the relationship with the person of their choice and that the pursuit of such happiness is entirely normal, indeed is a human birthright; and that the person they choose to share their life with and the person they hope and expect to find sexual fulfillment with are one and the same.<sup>6</sup>

He calls such a model of romantic love 'a passionate spiritual-emotional-sexual attachment'. It entails a disposition 'to experience the loved being as the embodiment of profoundly important personal values -- and, as a consequence, a real or potential source of joy' (p.221). The important personal values embodied in the partners satisfy the spiritual and bodily needs of each other in such a union so that both experience a unique sense of wholeness. Supported by studies of the family, he puts forward his view that although romantic love has had a long history in Western Europe, its acceptance as the proper basis of marriage has never been as widespread as it has been in American culture. The reason for such a state of affairs, he feels, can be attributed to the individualism and secularism of the United States, which were essential for the ideal of romantic love to take deep cultural root.

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6 Nathaniel Branden, 'A Vision of Romantic Love', in *The Psychology of Love*, pp.218-31 (pp.218-19).

Romantic love is by no means felt to be the sole *raison d'être* of marriage even in the West. In fact although Denis de Rougemont acknowledges that no other civilization has embarked with the same assurance as America did upon the enterprise of making marriage coincide with romantic love, and of making the first depend upon the second, he explicitly states that his central purpose in writing his *Love in the Western World* was 'to describe the inescapable conflict in the West between passion and marriage'.<sup>7</sup> Defining passion as suffering, and passionate love as romantic love, he sees an inevitable conflict between romantic love and marriage, because in passionate love we 'give ourselves up ardently to something we should never claim as our due' (*Love in the Western World*, p.16). His lengthy classic work traces the rise and fall of the myth of romantic love in the Western world. He takes myth to be, speaking generally, a story which sums up an infinite number of more or less analogous situations, and more narrowly, expressing the rules of conduct of a given social or religious group. Therefore a myth represents 'the entirely anonymous expression' of collective or common facts, with the power to win over us without our knowing. The myth of romantic love originated in the courtly society of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, dissolved long since. 'Yet its laws remain our laws in

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<sup>7</sup> Denis de Rougemont, *Love in the Western World*, translated by Montgomery Belgion (New York: Schocken Books, 1983; first published c1956), pp. 291-92, 8.



an unsuspected and diluted form,' maintained De Rougemont (p.19). The laws of conduct between man and woman as typified by the myth, so to speak, are still in force in Western society today, or to put it more accurately, in some strata of Western society. These laws are the more influential because they are being adopted unconsciously and automatically by their users.

#### **4.1 Kövecses' models of love and Sylvia Plath's individual variation**

We have discussed briefly the psychological, social, and cultural formulations of contemporary models of love in the previous section. However, consistent with our overall theoretical orientation, we shall attempt to use cognitive models of love constructed from metaphorical concepts inherent in everyday contemporary English. Instead of building up cognitive models from scratch as I did with regard to models of sickness in Part I, I shall adopt the models presented by Zoltán Kövecses in his book *The Language of Love: The Semantics of Passion in Conversational English*. Kövecses' models have been formulated on the basis of everyday linguistic expressions commonly used by or are familiar to most native speakers of English in America today, following Lakoff and Johnson's methodology. Many of the expressions he uses are conventionalized linguistic expressions. The resulting models are folk models of romantic love. Incidentally many of the components in Kövecses' models

tally with the findings of the researchers mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, which may be said to give support or validity to his models. I shall examine the various concepts of love in Chapter 5 when I discuss translations of Plath's poetry. For our present purposes, I quote the ideal model of love put forward by Kövecses as follows:

1. *True love comes along.*

The other attracts me irresistibly.

The attraction reaches the limit point on the intensity scale at once.

2. *The intensity of the attraction goes beyond the limit point.*

3. I am in a state of lack of control.

Love's intensity is maximal.

I feel that my love gives me extra energy.

I view myself and the other as forming a unity.

I experience the relationship as a state of perfect harmony.

I see love as something that guarantees the stability of the relationship.

*I believe that love is a need, that this love is my true love, that the object of love is irreplaceable, and that love lasts forever.*

Love is mutual.

I experience certain physiological effects: increase in body heat, increase in heart rate, blushing, and interference with accurate



perception.

I exhibit certain behavioral reactions: physical closeness, intimate sexual behavior, sex, loving visual behavior.

I experience love as something pleasant.

I define my attitude toward the object of love through a number of emotions and emotional attitudes: liking, sexual desire, respect, devotion, self-sacrifice, enthusiasm, admiration, kindness, affection, care, attachment, intimacy, pride, longing, friendship, and interest.

I am happy.<sup>8</sup> (*italics mine*)

The ideal model is noteworthy in two characteristics. It upholds the myth of the passivity of the self, assigning an active role to love. We fall in love involuntarily and with great intensity. This is what we call, in ordinary language, 'love at first sight'. Furthermore, the intensity remains beyond the limit point indefinitely, meaning that love lasts forever.

It is inevitable that such a language-based folk model of ideal love as characterized above sets up ideals too high to be achieved. Kövecses thus formulates another model of love, slightly more realistic and practicable, which he calls the typical model. For the italicized

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8 Zoltán Kövecses, *The Language of Love: The Semantics of passion in Conversational English* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1988), pp.58-59. Quoted model is given in double-spacing for easy reading.

lines in items 1 and 2 of the ideal model, he substitutes the following, expanding the last item into 2 and 3:

1. I search for true love.

I find true love.

.....

2. I try to keep control of my emotions (the attraction); that is, I make an effort to prevent love's intensity from going beyond the limit.

3. The effort is unsuccessful; I lose control over love: love's intensity goes beyond the limit. (*The Language of Love*, p.67)

Instead of waiting for love to happen one takes on an active part to search for it. One also tries to control one's emotion, though failing in the end. Another deviation from the ideal model is the omission of 'love lasts forever' from item 3 (now item 4 of the typical model). The typical model has an added sequel in item 5:

5. Love is fulfilled in marriage.

Love's intensity decreases; it goes below the limit: love turns into affection.

(*The Language of Love*, p.68)

Ecstatic romantic love culminates in marriage and settles down into peaceful affection.

Sylvia Plath's individual model as worked out from the linguistic expressions in her writings, especially in her journals and letters, fits a certain combination of



the above two models. Her mother, Aurelia Plath, in her introduction to *Letters Home*, says: 'I shared with them [my children] the belief my husband and I had held concerning the importance of aiming and directing one's life toward an idealistic goal in order to build a strong inner life'.<sup>9</sup> Familial upbringing has fostered a streak of idealism in Sylvia Plath. She is pronounced a perfectionist by her psychiatrist, Dr Ruth Beuscher (*Letters Home*, p.128). In her letters and journals she time and again admits the pain she suffered through her inability to measure up to her own high expectations of herself.<sup>10</sup> In keeping with her character traits for perfection, she aspires to the ideal model in her experience of love. It is with rapturous, almost breathless exclamations that she gives praise to their miraculous love in the happy days of her marriage with Ted Hughes: 'I feel, miraculously, I have the impossible, the wonderful -- I am perfectly at one with Ted, body and soul' (*Journals*, March 28, 1958, p.212). With religious fervour she calls upon whatever supernatural

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9 Sylvia Plath, *Letters Home: Correspondence 1950-1963*, selected and edited with commentary by Aurelia Schober Plath (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), p.31.

10 To mention a few examples, Plath laments: 'Never will I reach the perfection I long for with all my soul' (*Letters Home*, p.40) and that 'the hardest thing... to accept in life is "not being perfect" in any way' (*Letters Home*, p.201). She also admits her 'absurd streak of idealism and perfection' in her *Journals*, edited by Ted Hughes and Frances McCullough (New York: Ballantine Books, 1982), p.98.

forces at her disposal to sustain the perfect state of her love unto eternity. In the same entry a few lines down, she writes: 'May my demons and seraphs guard me on the right way and we live long toward white hair and creative wisdom and die in a flash of light in each other's arms' (p.212). However, determined to take a practical course of action to achieve her goal, she did not sit passively to wait for true love to come along, but searched for it, calling it a 'game of searching for a mate' (*Journals*, letter to Eddie Cohen, p.15). In the end she found true love: 'I needed, after thirteen long years of having no man who could take all my love and give me a steady flow of love in return, a man who would make a perfect circuit of love and all else with me. I found one. ....I did what I felt the one thing and married the man I felt [was] the only man I could love (*Journals*, Dec 12 1958, p.269)'. Plath's idea of romantic love culminates in marriage. This fits de Rougemont's model of romantic love, American style. Through linguistic evidence de Rougemont finds that 'in America the terms "love" and "marriage" are practically equivalent; that when one "loves" one must get married instantly' (*Love in the Western World*, p.292). Bernard Murstein also draws linguistic evidence from popular songs which reflect the American public's belief in 'love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage ('A Taxonomy of Love', *The Psychology of Love*, p.13). Plath's case substantiates the view put forward by Nathaniel Branden that romantic love is the prologue to marriage



in the United States discussed earlier. Furthermore her emphasis on personal fulfilment through love marks her kinship with Branden's 'passionate spiritual-emotional-sexual' variety of romantic love.

What Plath sees in 'love as a need' is specifically related to her sense of fulfilment as a wife and mother and as a creative artist. Her journals are full of entries expressing her fear of conflicts between her domestic and literary careers, of the sapping of her creative energy after marriage, and of domination by her husband.<sup>11</sup> She feels her conflict is resolved when she 'met with an equal soul' in Ted Hughes, an *English* poet whom she took to be her literary mentor, 'a soul which is kingly and beautiful and strong' (*Letters Home*, p.228-29). She exclaims with joy: 'For the first time in my life I can use *all* my knowing and laughing and force and writing to the hilt all the time', and feels 'a growing strength' (*Letters Home*, p.234).

It is on these three counts that Plath's individual model deviates from the ideal one formulated by Kövecses,

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11 To quote just a few examples from her *Journals* in the 50s: 'Marriage is self-expression, but if only my art, my writing, isn't just a mere sublimation of my sexual desires which will run dry once I get married' (p.15). She asks, 'would marriage sap my creative energy and annihilate my desire for written and pictorial expression?' (p.23) She asserts that she 'must have a legitimate field' of her own, apart from her husband's, 'which he must respect' (p.35), and is 'a little scared of being dominated' (p.43). She fervently loves 'to cook and make a house, and surge force into a man's dreams, and write' (p.110).

namely, 1. searching for true love, 2. love ending in marriage, and 3. love satisfying the needs of being a wife and mother and a creative writer. In all other respects she adheres closely to the ideal model.

The unfortunate deterioration of her hoped-for-perfect love relationship and subsequent break-up of her marriage turn the ideal model into a non-prototypical or perverted one. It is much to be regretted that very few of the journals written during this unhappy period of her life have survived. The notebook containing entries for the last months up to within three days of her death were destroyed by her husband.<sup>12</sup> Plath's comments on her state of love/marriage can only be gleaned from the letters collected by her mother in *Letters Home*.<sup>13</sup> Her poems of course stand as a rich source of her metaphorical concepts on the subject. I propose as follows a 'perverted' model as compared with the ideal one with which Plath conceptualizes love after her relationship with Ted was seriously threatened and eventually broken

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12 See the 'Foreword' by Ted Hughes, *Journals*, p.xv.

13 Plath describes her greatly stressed emotional state in her letters to her mother. In her letter dated August 27, 1962, she finds 'the degraded and agonized life', which has stopped her writing and ruined her sleep and health, unbearable (p.460)'. In spite of the 'torture' (p.462) and the 'hell' (p.467) she is going through, she is most desirous of building a new life (p.469). And she is confident that this can be achieved through her writing: 'To make a new life.... I am a genius of a writer; I have it in me. I am writing the best poems of my life; they will make my name' (p.468).



up:

1. True love goes away.

I am jealous, angry, and pained by its desertion.

2. I feel that the departure of love leaves a void.

I feel my life degraded and impoverished.

Loss of love makes me sick.

Loss of love makes me mad.

I view the unity with the other broken, and I am crippled and unwhole.

I experience the relationship as a state of disharmony; it is stifling and restrictive.

Love has turned sour and the relationship is severed.

Love which is unfaithful is not wanted because it is not true love.

I believe the object of love is replaceable, and that love is changeable.

My true love is not reciprocated.

I experience certain physiological effects: increase in body heat, internal pressure, and interference with accurate perception.

I exhibit certain behavioural reactions: withdrawal, physical distance, quarrel, fight.

I experience desertion of love as torture.

I define my attitude toward the object of love through a number of emotions and emotional attitudes: shock, disillusion, indignation, hatred, revulsion.

I am unhappy.

3. Departure of love brings about the break-up of marriage.

4. I try to keep control of my emotions by writing.

I achieve a new life through a perceptual reordering of my experience.

I lose control and go to my death.

This perverted model is constructed upon the scheme of Kövecses' ideal model of love, and is intended to show up the differences between the two. The intricacies of the metaphorical concepts in her poetry that give support to it will be dealt with when we examine the poetic metaphors of love together with their translation problems in the following chapter.

## **4.2 Conflicts with traditional Chinese concepts of love**

If romantic love is a cultural construct unique to the West, the transmission of such a concept and its relating metaphors into Chinese would no doubt meet with formidable barriers. Indeed many scholars even deny the existence of romantic love in Chinese culture. De Rougemont, in his introduction to the 1982 edition of his book, proclaims that the West is distinct from other cultures by its invention of passionate love, which is unknown in India and China (*Love in the Western World*, p.9). Averill names traditional Chinese and Japanese



societies as examples in which romantic love did not exist because 'the individual was not sharply distinguished from the collectivity, and hence there was no basis for romantic idealization'.<sup>14</sup>

The emphasis on the social recognition of individuality as a prerequisite for romantic love is succinctly summed up by Solomon: 'Only in a society with an enormously powerful ideology of the individual, in which the "alienation" of the individual from the larger society is not only tolerated but even encouraged and celebrated, can the phenomenon of romantic love be conceivable (*Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor*, p.136)'. He argues his point more forcefully in his Introduction to his book for the kind of society which makes romantic love possible:

It is a society which places extraordinary emphasis on the concept of individuality and individual self-identity, a society which distinguishes more or less plainly between public positions and personal roles, a society which places a premium on individual idealization, fantasy and fiction, and perhaps most importantly, a society that grants a high degree of mobility and flexibility in relationships in general, places personal choice at the core of mating and marriage rituals and the idea of what we call "intimacy" at the very center of interpersonal relationships. (p.xxviii)

Solomon's opinion on the impact of modern social organization and values on the romantic ideal is criticized by Stanton Peele as an overstatement. Peele

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14 See James R. Averill, 'The Social Construction of Emotion: With Special Reference to Love' in *The Social Construction of the Person*, p.101.

adds the point that an increasingly urbanized society gives marriage a dominating position above all other emotional attachments, which is accentuated by the appearance of the nuclear family.<sup>15</sup>

The psychological anthropologist Francis L.K. Hsu, who has made a comprehensive study of the cultural differences between Americans and Chinese, admits that 'love' as it is used by Americans, has never been respectable in China. 'The Chinese term *lien ai* or romantic love is strictly a modern linguistic creation, reflecting the need of an expression for its Western equivalent'.<sup>16</sup> Hsu proposes that the contrastive behaviour of Americans and Chinese can be reduced to two characteristics: the former being *individual-centred*, with emphasis on the predilections of the individual, and the latter *situation-centred*, with emphasis on one's appropriate place and behaviour among one's fellowmen. The individual-centred culture attaches great importance to the emotions while the situation-centred culture tends to underplay all matters of the heart (*Americans and Chinese: Passage to Differences*, p.12). This difference is reflected in the relative importance of romantic love in the United States and in China. Hsu's formulation

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15 Stanton Peele, 'Fools for Love: The romantic Ideal, Psychological Theory, and Addictive Love' in *The Psychology of Love*, pp.159-188 (p.175).

16 Francis L.K. Hsu, *Americans and Chinese: Passage to Differences* (Honolulu: the University Press of Hawaii, 1981), third edition, p.49.



appears to be able to focus on the problem better than the broad category of individualism versus collectivism in which the American and the Chinese have been compared.<sup>17</sup> The Chinese sociologist Ambrose Y.C. King voices his dissatisfaction at the application of the above dichotomy to viewing Chinese society, which he finds to be neither individualistic nor collectivistic but ethical or relational, with emphasis on the relation between particular individuals.<sup>18</sup> In the context of the Confucian ethics, this would entail each individual finding his appropriate place in the social relational network and performing his particular role accordingly. It is hardly surprising that passionate love as described by De Rougemont is said to be unknown in China, since its very definition of giving 'ourselves up ardently to something we should never dare claim as our due' would

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17 The individualism-collectivism dimension appears to be the conventional perspective of viewing the Western-Chinese cultural difference. Among scholars taking this stand see James Averill (note 4), Kenneth L. Dion and Karen K. Dion, 'Romantic Love: Individual and Cultural Perspectives', in *The Psychology of Love*, pp.264-89; and Michael Harris Bond, *Beyond the Chinese Face: Insights from Psychology* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1991).

18 See Ambrose Y.C. King, 'The Individual and Group in Confucianism: A Relational Perspective', in *Individualism and Holism: Studies in Confucian and Taoist Values*, edited by Donald J. Munro (Ann Arbor: Centre for Chinese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1985), pp.57-70. See also his collection of papers in Chinese, *Zhongguo shehui yu wenhua* 中國社會與文化 (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1992).

make it illegitimate in a society in which acting out one's role prescribed by the Confucian ethical code in a pre-existing hierarchy reigns supreme.

The idea of man and woman's place in society is bound up with basic concepts of the Chinese cosmology, since human beings together with all other things are informed by one universal principle and share the same ontological reality. Unlike the Western myth (giving rise to the unity metaphor) expounded in Aristophanes' speech in Plato's *Symposium*, that human beings were double creatures, cleft in two by Zeus for their hubris, struggling to be reunited through love<sup>19</sup>, in traditional Chinese thinking the union of man and woman, or the male and female principles, as fundamental to the composition of the cosmos. An often quoted passage from *The Book of Changes* goes like this: 'Heaven is lofty and earth is low; thus *qian* 乾 (the symbol for heaven) and *kun* 坤 (the symbol for earth) are determined. In correspondence with this difference between low and high, things noble and base are assigned their places.... The attributes of the *qian* constitute the male; those of the *kun* constitute the female.'<sup>20</sup> The male is identified with *qian*, lofty and noble, and the female with *kun*, low and base. The Han

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19 Quoted from *Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor*, p.24.

20 Chinese text from *Zhou Yi Zheng Yi: xi ci shang zhuan* 周易正義:繫辭上傳, chapter 7 in *Shi san jing zhu shu* 十三經注疏 no. 1 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, c1960). English translations are my own unless otherwise specified.



philosopher Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 B.C.) elaborates on this with the doctrine of Yin and Yang and the five elements, attributing Yang to the male and Yin to the female. Putting forward the proposition that cosmic and human affairs are inter-related, he develops the superiority of the Yang and the inferiority of the Yin into the prescribed behaviour of husband and wife, the latter bound to be deferential to the former.<sup>21</sup> If one uses the words implied by the unity metaphor, then the Chinese woman is not considered the equal half, still less the better half of her husband. Rather, she is to be ruled by her husband, in accordance with one of the three ruling principles of Dong, namely, 'The husband is the ruling principle of the wife'.

Man and woman as husband and wife are required to keep their place within the Confucian hierarchy in a patriarchal society structured by kinship relations. The relation between husband and wife is one of the five cardinal relations. The others are those between ruler and subject, father and son, elder and younger brothers, and friends (the relation between ruler and subject and that between friends being modelled on the kinship relation of father and son and that of brothers respectively). Unlike the modern nuclear family in

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21 See Dong Zhongshu, *Chun Qiu Fan Lu* 春秋繁露, especially chapter 53: 'ji yi' 基義 and chapter 43: 'yang zun yin bei' 陽尊陰卑 in *Si Ku Quan Shu* 四庫全書, edited by Wang Yunwu 王雲五, (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1983).

urbanized parts of the country, the extended family in <sup>traditional</sup> China had an intricate net of familial relationship in which the knot between husband and wife is not of central or paramount importance. <sup>According to the dominant patriarchal thinking,</sup> a woman playing the role of daughter, wife, and mother in different stages of her life, was expected to orientate her behaviour and emotions accordingly, in the process of which obligations and duties take precedence over her personal inclinations. The so-called *li* 禮, established rites, are an embodiment of the Confucian ethical code, whose main function is to prescribe proper behaviour in accordance with one's status in the web of patriarchal relations. The scholar Wu Zhihui 吳稚暉 (1866-1953) sums up the essential difference between the rites or etiquette of the Chinese and the West as follows: 'It seems that the rites of the Chinese are mostly designed for determining one's status whereas those of the West emphasize harmonizing the emotions'.<sup>22</sup> Within the Confucian code, the emotions are not assigned as important a place as they are in Western culture. Moreover they have to be carefully controlled. Confucius recommended that the way to attain *ren* 仁, or perfect virtue, is to restrain oneself in order to bring oneself within the bounds of *li*.<sup>23</sup>

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22 From Wu Zhihui *xiansheng wencun* 吳稚暉先生文存 (Shanghai: Shanghai Yixue shuju, 1925), vol.2, quoted in Liu Zaifu 劉再復 and Lin Gang 林崗, *Lun Zhongguo wenhua dui ren de sheji* 論中國文化對人的設計 (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1988), p.28.

23 *Lun yu* 論語, chapter 12, Yan Yuan 顏淵 in *Shi san jing*



It is logical to assume that in a culture that emphasizes restraint and self-control, romantic love is not given full rein. All along I have not discussed love between man and woman outside marriage, as such an emotion has no place within the Confucian ethical code. The only legitimate love between the sexes is that between husband and wife, and even that has to be circumscribed. 'Respect' is upheld as the rule of behaviour. A model couple is to 'respect each other like honourable guests', *xiang jing ru bin* 相敬如賓, as the saying goes. Another proverb crystallizes a similar idea: 'they are husband and wife in bed but (behave like host and) guests out of bed', *chuang shang fuqi chuang xia ke*, 床上夫妻床下客. According to Robert Solomon's analysis, 'respect is an attitude that is distinctively impersonal, anonymous, the very antithesis of intimacy (*Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor*, p.196)'. In traditional society, it is thought improper for intimacy between the sexes to be displayed in public; passion in love, if not supposed to be non-existent, is at least not mentioned.

The Confucian ethical code as discussed above is deeply rooted in Chinese culture, shaping the people's attitudes and influencing their sense of values. I would call this the dominant tradition as it is upheld by the general public and rulers alike.<sup>24</sup> Sentiments and values

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*zhu shu*, no. 10.

24 Lee Kuan-yew, senior minister of Singapore, in an interview with TVB of Hong Kong, in December 1992,

in conformity with the above are supported by the establishment, and find expression in canonical literature. However, romantic love, contrary to the opinion aired by De Rougemont, is by no means absent in Chinese culture. It is banished to the *alternative* tradition, and abounds in folklore and in literary genres outside the traditional 'respectable' works fit for the study of scholars, namely, novels, drama, and *ci* 詞 (as distinguished from *shi* 詩, among which love poems are wont to be interpreted allegorically). The dominant and the folk traditions are continuously struggling for power and re-adjustment. Cultural values are therefore neither stable nor unanimously accepted by all strata of society.

In periods of national crises and intellectual ferment, the Chinese have tried to free themselves from traditional bondage. Starting from the Reformation Movement headed by Kang Youwei 康有爲, Liang Qichao 梁啓超, Tan Sitong 譚嗣同, and Yan Fu 嚴復 at the turn of the nineteenth century, the revolt against arranged marriages, the campaign for freedom to love, and the liberation of women gradually worked their way, gathering force in the May Fourth Movement of the early twentieth century.<sup>25</sup> As a result the concepts of marriage and

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emphasized the point that the cultural tradition of the Chinese people and the thinking of their rulers have not changed. He felt that the Chinese leaders are patriarchal and agreed with his interviewer that they are 'communists in Confucian cloak'.

25 See Tang Da 唐達, Yan Jianping 嚴建平, and Zhao



romantic love have undergone incessant change and revision. Contacts with the West and the influx of new ideas have continued to modify the attitudes and values of the Chinese.

With the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the campaign to place women on equal footing with men was carried out, although with serious shortcomings, e.g. with respect to equality in wages and salaries, opportunities for employment and so on. The Marriage Law and other new legal codes were introduced to redefine the dual role of women in production and reproduction. The slogan of 'women hold up half the sky' became a household word, yet the deep-rooted belief in male superiority and Confucian ideology still persisted.<sup>26</sup> Men and women were granted the right by law to choose their marital partners without interference or obstruction from their parents or other third parties, yet romantic love in which passion is unbridled from political or social obligations, was not encouraged, and during the Cultural Revolution<sup>(1966-1976)</sup> the word 'love' was taboo. Solomon, writing in the years immediately following, notes that 'romantic love was just beginning to blossom in mainland China (Love: Emotion, Myth, and Metaphor, p.136)'. The process

Renjun 趙人俊, *Wenhua chuantong yu hunyin yanbian* 文化傳統與婚姻演變 (Shanghai: Wenhui chubanshe, 1991), pp.28-42 and Chow Tse-tsung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967; first published in 1960), pp.254-337.

26 See Elisabeth Croll, *Chinese Women Since Mao* (London: Zed books, 1983), especially, pp.1-19.

is slow and there are social pressure and restrictions of all sorts against romantically inclined lovers.<sup>27</sup> Croll's study, *Chinese Women Since Mao*, finds that ideally speaking, love is 'entirely conceived as a prelude to a long and lasting relationship based on the equality, affection and respect between two freely-chosen partners in marriage' (p.75). But in reality, arranged or semi-arranged marriages were still prevalent in the countryside, and third parties were likely to play some part in introducing the couples in the cities. The chief characteristics listed as most desirable in a marriage partner are often too mundane to fit the romantic model. For instance, qualities such as being honest, upright, good natured, hardworking and having a progressive ideology; and physical characteristics such as height and socio-economic characteristics such as income, occupation, educational level; and even the possession of certain consumer goods often expressed in terms of legs of furniture were considered as prerequisites to marriage (pp.78-79). This overtly materialistic picture of love/marriage forms an amazing contrast with Nathaniel Branden's American vision of 'spiritual-emotional-sexual' model of romantic love discussed in the beginning of this chapter.

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27 Francis Hsu quotes a murder case reported in the October 20, 1979 issue of the *People's Daily*, in which the female murderer was a victim of persecution, because she was alleged to have had pre-marital sex (*Americans and Chinese: Passage to Differences*, pp.70-73).



In Chinese societies that are comparatively more open, such as Hong Kong and Taiwan, in which the subject of love has not been taboo, romantic love has also blossomed. Even so, traditional values have not lost their hold.<sup>28</sup> They would be upheld by certain parts of the population or indeed by the same individual who espouses traditional values for certain things while adopting new values for others. It is with full awareness of the complexity of the phenomena, of the constant shifts and changes possible, that I have attempted to draw attention to the conflicts between traditional Chinese concepts of love and their <sup>traditional and contemporary</sup> counterparts in the West.<sup>29</sup>

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28 Francis Hsu quotes a story appearing in a major Taiwan daily reporting the wedding of an army officer and his third wife in 1977, organized by his first wife and concubine, who contrived to make the marriage legal by their fake divorces with their husband. Hsu remarks: 'the fake divorces only show how far the old Chinese culture pattern is still alive and well and how great is the psychological distance between Chinese custom and modern Chinese law' (*Americans and Chinese: Passage to Difference*, pp.10-11).

29 Besides the works mentioned in the above footnotes I have also consulted the following works on love and marriage in China: Feng Fei 馮飛, *Nüxing lun* 女性論 (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1990; first published in 1931); Su Changmei 蘇昌美, *Ai de zhexue* 愛的哲學 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 1983); Liao Ben 廖奔 and Liu Yanjun 劉彥君, *Ai de kunhuo* 愛的困惑 (Beijing: Guoji wenhua chuban gongsi, 1988); Shao Fuxian 邵伏先, *Zhongguo de hunyin yu jiating* 中國的婚姻與家庭 (Beijing: renmin chubanshe, 1989).

CHAPTER FIVE  
TRANSLATING METAPHORS OF LOVE IN SYLVIA  
PLATH'S POETRY

If we accept the premise that romantic love is culture-specific, and there are in existence conflicts between Western or American concepts of love and those accepted by the traditional Chinese, translating metaphors of love will inevitably encounter formidable barriers. Given the fact that the culture of a people is always changing, assimilating into itself new elements and discarding old ones, a general all-encompassing term like Western, American, or Chinese culture will at best denote some essential characteristics recognized to be the core component of that particular culture at a specific period or point in time. Furthermore these characteristics are by no means shared by all members of that culture. Cultural difference is as difficult to pinpoint as is the response of the receptors affected by it. Our adoption of the Translation as Communication model implies the transmission of a message to its receptor in his role as reader/audience. As translating metaphors of love in Plath's poetry will involve reading parts of or entire poems, the receptor functions as a reader. The dynamic nature of translating requires the realization of each act of communication just as the reader response theory stresses realization of the text in reading and the latter may be used to shed light on the translating



process.<sup>1</sup> The receptor's comprehension and response will be governed by cultural norms and values and by individual disposition.<sup>2</sup> As different receptors may partake of different cultural norms and values in accordance with their personal dispositions, or have different 'horizon of expectations', their response may vary.<sup>3</sup>

Reader response theory in the main deals with readers belonging to the same culture as or closely-related to that of the author. Our case in translating is more complicated in that the author and reader belong to cultures that are widely apart. Wolfgang Iser, in order

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1 Susan R. Suleiman distinguishes six approaches to audience-oriented criticism: rhetorical; semiotic and structuralist; phenomenological; subjective and psychoanalytic; sociological and historical; and hermeneutic, in *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, edited by Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp.6-7. Although I would not restrict myself exclusively to using anyone of these approaches, I shall, for my purposes, draw mostly from Wolfgang Iser's theory.

2 See Wolfgang Iser, *Prospecting: From Reader Response to Literary Anthropology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.50.

3 The 'horizon of expectations' is the key term in reading used by Hans-Robert Jauss. See his 'Literary History as a challenge to Literary Theory', in *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, translated by Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), pp.3-35. This term is defined by Susan Suleiman as 'the set of cultural, ethical, and literary (generic, stylistic, thematic) expectations of a work's readers "in the historical moment of its appearance"' (*The Reader in the Text*, p.35).

to illustrate the point that in reading one must think the thoughts of someone else, quotes George Poulet's analysis: 'Whatever I think is a part of *my* mental world. And yet here I am thinking a thought which manifestly belongs to another mental world, which is being thought in me just as though I did not exist'.<sup>4</sup> It would be easier to negate one's mental world in favour of another if both worlds are essentially similar. Suppose the thoughts of the author conflict with the values of the reader, which is not unlikely if the latter belongs to an alien culture. One possibility is that the reader may not arrive at the same conclusion as that of the author, or the process of thinking may even be blocked mid-way. An alternative way of reaction, of course, is for the reader to reorganize his own social, cultural, and literary systems and reformulate his vision of reality accordingly. The degree of variability and the element of indeterminacy loom large when one attempts to investigate the response of the reader/receptor.

In our discussion of the translating process we shall not in most cases deal with the 'real' or actual readers, with the exception of the translator, who is the actual reader of the source language text. The reader of the source language text whose response we use as a standard

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<sup>4</sup> George Poulet, 'Phenomenology of Reading', *New Literary History*, I (1969) 54, quoted in Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p.292.



for comparison is the so-called 'implied reader', the embodiment of 'all those predispositions necessary for a literary work to exercise its effect-- predispositions laid down ... by the text itself', which so to speak, contains 'a network of response-inviting structures'.<sup>5</sup> For lack of supporting evidence on the actual reception of the translations under examination which are all quite recent, the reader of the translations we discuss will also be the implied reader in the above sense with relation to the target language text, which has undergone a transformation by the translator, who is the reader of the source text and the author of the target text.

To study the metaphors of love in the poetry of Sylvia Plath, I use as my working corpus one hundred and eighteen Chinese translations which I have collected on fifty-seven titles of Plath's poetry. These translations, made by over twenty translators, were gleaned from periodicals and anthologies, of which full information is provided in Appendix II. Publication details will not be given every time a translation is mentioned.

### 5.1 Conventional metaphors of love

Plath's early love poetry, forming a striking contrast with that of her late period, contains recurrent metaphors in keeping with the ideal model of romantic

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5 Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p.34.

love expounded by Kövecses. An early poem, 'Mad Girl's Love Song', described by Plath as her 'favourite villanelle',<sup>6</sup> was written in a mad mood when she was expecting her boyfriend who didn't come. She recalled this occasion when she was waiting and yearning to see Ted Hughes, her 'true love', in a burning fury.<sup>7</sup> This poem is dominated by the metaphor LOVE IS MADNESS, enacting the well-known expression 'I'm crazy about you'.

Unlike her late poetry written mainly in free verse, this poem adheres to the strict form of the villanelle, consisting of nineteen lines on two rhymes in six stanzas. The opening tercet is as follows:

I shut my eyes and all the world drops dead;  
I lift my lids and all is born again.  
(I think I made you up inside my head.)

The first line rhymes with the third and both lines recur alternately at the end of the other tercets, both repeated at the close of the concluding quatrain. The scheme is AbA', abA, abA', abA, abA', abAA'. Such a strict form does impose some constraints on translating.

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6 'Mad Girl's Love Song: A villanelle' was published in *Mademoiselle*, 37, no. 10 (August 1953), p.358. Lines of this poem discussed here are quoted from the above issue of *Mademoiselle*. Edward Butscher mentioned this poem as Plath's 'favourite villanelle' in his *Sylvia Plath: Method and Madness* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1976), p.79.

7 In her March 10, 1956 entry, she records: 'I wrote "Mad Girl's Love Song" in a mad mood like this when Mike didn't come' (*Journals*, p.131). 'Mike' refers to Myron Lotz, who according to Ted Hughes' annotation, 'seemed to have a lot of the qualities on Plath's prospective husband checklist' (*Journals*, p.66).



Zhang Cuo 張錯, the translator of this poem, also uses two rhymes (though by no means perfect) throughout, for instance, 'wan' 完 (1.1) rhyming with 'xiang' 像 (1.3), preceding the unstressed syllables as A and A' and 'lai' 來 (1.2) as b:<sup>8</sup>

*wo bishang yanjing zhengge shijie jiu hudi wanle*  
*wo dakai yan yiqie you chongxin huozhuan guolai*  
*(wo xiang ni shi wo xinzhongde huanxiang bale)*

我閉上眼睛整個世界就忽地完了；  
 我打開眼一切又重新活轉過來，  
 (我想你是我心中的幻像吧了)

(I shut my eyes and the whole world suddenly comes to an end;/ I open my eyes and all becomes alive again,/ I think I made you up in my head.) The two contrasting worlds introduced in the original: LOVE IS LIFE and LOSS OF LOVE IS DEATH are effectively brought out by 'drops dead' and 'born again'. Although the antithesis is there, the translator's 'hudi wanle' and 'huozhuan guolai' do not suggest as strong images, probably because Zhang is constrained by the rhyme scheme in his choice of 'wanle'. The third line which is the refrain of the poem expresses an important idea in Plath's conceptualization of love -- the object of love is the poet's own creation. Zhang captures the theme very well by using the word 'huanxiang' 幻像 (illusion), again possibly motivated by the rhyme scheme. Illusion runs its natural course to disillusionment, which in turn easily leads to madness.

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8 Zhang Cuo's translation of this poem is collected in his *Dangdai meiguo nüshiren shixuan* (Taipei: Altai Press, 1981), pp.121-22.

The state of madness gives a negative perspective of love: passivity and lack of control. Loss of love has made the girl mad, but overwhelmed by love, one loses control and can be termed 'insane' as well:

I dreamed that you bewitched me into bed  
And sung me moon-struck, kissed me quite insane.  
(ll. 7-8)

Here lack of control is reinforced by the metaphor LOVE IS MAGIC, 'bewitched' rendered into 'yong mofa' 用魔法 (use magic). The overall metaphor is retained by translating 'mad girl' as 'fengnü' 瘋女 (mad girl) and both 'moonstruck' and 'insane' as 'fakuang' 發狂 (go mad), 'kuang' rhyming with the preceding line 'chuang' 床.

Another poem relating to the total subjectivity of love, entitled 'Soliloquy of the Solipsist', appeared on the same page as 'Mad Girl's Love Song' in the May 1957 issue of *Granta*.<sup>9</sup> The same image of shutting the eyes bringing about the destruction of the love-world occurs in the first and second stanzas:

When my eyes shut  
These dreaming houses all snuff out;  
(Stanza 1, ll.5-6)

... if I choose to blink  
They die.  
(Stanza 2, ll.8-9)

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9 Butscher, *Sylvia Plath: Method and Madness*, p.238. Lines quoted from 'Soliloquy of the Solipsist' are taken from Sylvia Plath's *Collected Poems*, edited by Ted Hughes (London: Faber and Faber, 1981), pp.37-38. All the poems of Plath quoted in this dissertation with the exception of 'Mad Girl's Love Song' are from this collection. Further reference to this collection will only give page numbers.



Interestingly 'snuffing out' in the first stanza superimposes the image of the snuffing out of a flame on the disappearance of the dreaming houses, drawing on the underlying metaphor LOVE IS FIRE. Cheng Guangwei 程光煒 brings out the metaphors of the eye but missed that of the snuffing out of the flame:

*dang wo yanjing bihe*  
*zhouwei zuomengde wuzi dou turan xiaoyin;*

當我眼睛閉合  
 周圍做夢的屋子都突然消隱；

(When my eyes shut  
 The dreaming houses around all vanish suddenly;)

*..... yidan wo zhamian [yan]*  
*tamen hui curan siwang*

.....一旦我眨眼[眼]  
 他們會猝然死亡。

(Once I blink my eyes  
 They will die all of a sudden.)<sup>10</sup>

As LOVE IS FIRE is a common metaphor in the conceptualization of love in the Chinese language, it should pose little difficulty. The translator's omission is probably due to oversight rather than translational constraints.

The last stanza sets forth the ideas of the poet most explicitly:

I  
 Know you appear

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<sup>10</sup> The translation of 'Soliloquy of the Solipsist' is collected in *Ershi shiji zhuming nüshiren jiazuo meixi*, edited by Cheng Guangwei, Zhao Guotai, and Meng Shiwei (Haikou: Hainan sheying meishu chubanshe, 1990), pp.14-15.

Vivid at my side,  
 Denying you sprang out of my head,  
 Claiming you feel  
 Love fiery enough to prove flesh real,  
 Though it's quite clear  
 All your beauty, all your wit, is a gift, my dear,  
 From me.

The object of love, no doubt, is 'the most wonderful person in the world' from the point of view of the lover. 'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder', as the saying goes, implies that the wonderful qualities in the object of love are fabricated by the lover and that LOVE IS BLIND. There is a parallel saying in Chinese 'qingren yanli chu Xi Shi' 情人眼裡出西施, the lover's eye sees a Xi Shi (a well-known beauty) in his mistress. As we have seen, there is no problem in the translating of the metaphors of the eye by Cheng, nor did he miss the metaphor LOVE IS FIRE in this instance:

wo  
 zhidao ni hui chuxian  
 zai wo shenbian shengdong bizhen  
 jujue chengren ni cong wode naodai tiaochu  
 xuancheng nide aiqing chireruhuo  
 zuyi zhengming routide zhenshi  
 qin'aide, jinguan zhedou xianeryijian  
 nide quanbu meili he zhihui  
 queshe wo kuizengde liwu

我  
 知道你會出現  
 在我身邊生動逼真  
 拒絕承認你從我的腦袋跳出  
 宣稱你的愛情熾熱如火  
 足以證明肉體的真實,  
 親愛的, 儘管這都顯而易見  
 你的全部美麗和智慧  
 卻是我饋贈的禮物。

(I/ know you will appear/ at my side, alive and vivid/  
 refusing to acknowledge that you sprang out of my head/



claiming that your love hot as fire/ enough to prove the body real,/ dear, though all these are quite obvious/ all your beauty and wisdom are a gift from me.) More crucial to understanding the theme of the poem, however, is the keyword of the title, 'Solipsist', which he mistranslates into *dubaizhe* 獨白者, 'soliloquist'. The word 'solipsism', according to the *Collins Dictionary of the English Language*, is 'the extreme form of scepticism which denies the possibility of any knowledge other than one's own existence'<sup>11</sup>. Plath's poem was written as 'a good-natured reply to her husband's "Soliloquy of a Misanthrope" from *The Hawk in the Rain*'.<sup>12</sup> The translator however interprets this as 'a typical feminist poem, in which the superiority of the intellect and the power of controlling the world is expressed to the greatest extent through the illusion and perverse sleep-talking of a somnambulist'.<sup>13</sup> Taking the theme of the poem to be the feminist's exertion of power and control, the translator missed the poet's insistence on the importance of the self in love and marriage. Lacking an overall understanding of Plath's central concern in achieving growth free from the domination of one's partner, one would not be able to

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11 *The Collins Dictionary of the English Language*, edited by Patrick Hanks, second edition (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1986), p.1452; hereafter abbreviated as *The Collins Dictionary*.

12 *Sylvia Plath: Method and Madness*, p.238.

13 Quoted from the translator's commentary on the poem in *Ershi shiji zhuming nüshiren jiazuo meixi*, p.15.

fully appreciate the significance of the subjective perspective of the poem.

The transforming power of love is eulogized in 'Love Letter' in an almost surrealist setting. 'The change you made' in l.1 is summarized as: 'If I'm alive now, then I was dead' (l.2, *Collected Poems*, p.147). LOVE IS LIFE-GIVING, and LOVE IS AWAKENING. 'I slept.../ And I slept on like a bent finger' (Stanza 2, l.1 - Stanza 3, l.1) and then, awakened by love,

I shone, mica-scaled, and unfolded  
To pour myself out like a fluid  
Among bird feet and the stems of plants  
(Stanza 3, ll.7-9).

The metaphors LOVE IS LIGHT and LOVE IS GROWTH are invoked to culminate in the state of transcendence described in the final stanza as a result of LOVE IS SPIRITUAL RENEWAL:

Trees and stone glittered, without shadows.  
My finger-length grew lucent as glass.  
I started to bud like a March twig:  
An arm and a leg, an arm, a leg.  
From stone to cloud, so I ascended.  
Now I resemble a sort of god  
Floating through the air in my soul-shift  
Pure as a pane of ice. It's a gift.

The translator Zhang Fenling 張芬齡 is able to carry over the above metaphors of love quite well. She renders the last three lines as follows:<sup>14</sup>

*xianzai wo fangfu mouzhong shenqi*

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14 Zhang Fenling's translation of 'Love Letter' is collected in *Xiandaishi qishi lu* (Taipei: Shulin, 1992), pp. 248-49. All of Zhang Fenling's translations quoted in this chapter are from the same collection unless otherwise indicated.



*chuankong piaofu yu huanxinde linghun zhi zhong  
chunjie ru pianbing. zhe shi tian ci.*

現在我彷彿某種神祇  
穿空飄浮於換新的露魂之中  
純潔如片冰。這是天賜。

(Now I seem to be a sort of god/ Through the air floating in a newly-changed soul/ Pure as a sheet of ice. This is a gift from god.) She makes use of a temporary compound 'huanxin', drawing on the idiomatic phrase 'tuo tai huan gu' 脫胎換骨 (to cast off one's old self or mortal frame and take on a new self; to be reborn), to translate 'soul-shift'. In so doing she successfully highlights spiritual transformation, bringing out the main idea of the poem with clarity. Furthermore she reinforces the spirituality developed all along by rendering 'gift' as 'tian ci' (gift from god) bringing the poem to rest on the right note and completing the cycle of transformation with LOVE IS PURIFICATION to LOVE IS A GIFT FROM GOD.

The metaphors of love underlying the ideal model of love found in the above poems meet with very little resistance in translating as they are neither innovative nor intricately related. These metaphors, though conventional, bear the imprint of Plath's individual model. For instance, the idealization of the object of love, the dynamics between dominance and growth of the self in love/marriage, and the spiritualization of the process of loving, all give emphasis to Plath's own variety of the model of love.

However the majority of the translations collected, are of the poems, thirty-six titles in all, written in

the late period beginning in 1962, when she internalized the images and objects perceived to express her intense emotional and mental experiences.<sup>15</sup> These poems give support to the perverted ideal model of love discussed in 4.1 and are most interesting in the way the basic metaphors are extended and manipulated in innovative ways. The rest of this chapter will deal with the translating of these metaphors.

## 5.2 Unity metaphor disintegrated

As shown by Kövecses, the metaphor that love is a unity of two complementary parts is central to the contemporary American conceptual model of love, going back at least to Plato. Its mythological origin arising from the 'natural' existence of human beings as double creatures before their punishment by Zeus shows that unity is thought to be the 'natural' state of humanity. Likewise in Chinese philosophical thought, the unity of the male and female principles is the natural composition of the cosmos as discussed in 4.2. Chinese idioms and expressions in current usage give support to the popular conceptualization of the unity metaphor, however unaware their users may be. The experiential basis of the metaphor consists in the perception of a thing made up of

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15 Jon Rosenblatt, *Sylvia Plath -- the Poetry of Initiation* (Chapel Hill: the University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp.87-89.



two complementary physical or chemical parts. In order to form an ideal unity, there must be perfect fit or match between the two parts. The idea of love as the unity of two complementary parts is seen in the use of the word for 'marry'--*jiehe* 結合, to be united in wedlock, literally 'to tie and join'. A couple getting married is said to be *qingtou yihe* 情投意合, (having) feelings and ideas fitting perfectly, and they would often be congratulated with the prospect of looking forward to *bainian haohe* 百年好合, a good union for a hundred years. Physical entities that match symbolize abstract qualities that are compatible with each other. A perfect pair is often described as *zhulian bihe* 珠聯璧合, literally 'pearls strung together and jades matching each other'. In traditional wedding, the bride and groom would perform the ritual of drinking the ceremonial wine on their nuptial night, called *hejin* 合巹, joining the wine cups, which is taken to mean getting married. The word for 'spouse' in contemporary Chinese is *pei'ou* 配偶, literally 'match'. The Western concept of two people 'being made for each other', the so-called metaphysical model, entails the idea that marriages are 'made in heaven' (*Love: Emotion, Myth and Metaphor*, p.24). This finds its parallel in Chinese folk beliefs that marriage is predestined--*qianshi yinyuan* 前世姻緣, being arranged by 'the old man under the moon', who tied a red string on the foot of husband and wife before they were born into this world, so that a perfect match is called *tian zuo zhi he* 天作之合, a union made in heaven. It follows

naturally that the Western concept of marriage as a bond between the two parts is likewise essential to the Chinese. We have seen earlier that the Chinese word *jiehe*, 'to be united in wedlock', is literally 'to tie and join'. Likewise *jiehun* 結婚 and *dihun* 締婚, alternate terms for 'to get married', both literally mean 'to tie the marital knot'. It is quite usual to describe the man and wife joined in marriage as *yongjie tongxin* 永結同心, tied forever with one heart. The above examples show that the unity metaphor is central to the Chinese conceptualization of love as well.

Plath, in her journals and letters, persistently uses the unity metaphor in describing her relationship with her husband, the *English* poet Ted Hughes, before and after their marriage. Ted is 'the perfect male counterpart' to her own self<sup>16</sup>, 'the black complement power: yang to ying' (*Journals*, p.166). I have shown in 4.1 that true to her idealistic trait, Plath subscribes to the concept, a natural entailment of the perfect fit or match between the two parts implied by the unity metaphor, that Ted is the only man in the world for her, namely, her 'true love', found after a life-long search and is irreplaceable.<sup>17</sup> The unity of the two parts into

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16 In her letter to her brother postmarked July 14, 1956 and to her mother dated September 11, 1956 respectively she also calls Ted 'the male counterpart of myself'. See *Letters Home*, p.264 and p.270.

17 See relevant passage in *Journals* quoted in 4.1. Again on p.312 of *Journals*, she reiterates that Ted is 'the one man in the world right for me, the one man I could love'. In her letter to her brother dated June 18,



one whole is the unity of the life of the lovers into one. Sylvia Plath believes that she has 'no life separate from his' (*Journals*, p.326) as they 'have mystically become one' (*Letters Home*, p.276). Although both parts can 'grow and change' (*Letters Home*, p.256) while together, the union is so strong that it is impossible for either part 'to be whole or healthy apart' (*Letters Home*, p.281). The above entailments of harmony, growth, physical closeness, wholeness and wholesomeness of the metaphor contribute towards fabricating the complex conceptual network of love as unity of two complementary parts.

The poem 'Event', originally called 'Quarrel', written on 21 May 1962, when the poet's once idyllic marriage was threatened by the intrusion of another woman<sup>18</sup>, evolves round a central metaphor of disintegrated unity. The metaphorical complex works on four planes: a 'rift', 'fault', or 'gap'; the act of touching; dismemberment; and the ring. The couple lying in bed, back to back, separated by the moonlight, is seen as divided by the 'rift' of a 'chalk cliff' (ll.2-4). Of

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1956, she announces her marriage with the following statement: 'I have at last found the one man in the world for me' (*Letters Home*, p.257).

18 According to Anne Stevenson's *Bitter Fame: A Life of Sylvia Plath* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), 'Event' was written the day after the visit of David and Assia Wevill, during which Assia and Ted were mutually attracted to each other. Their relationship later developed into an affair (p.244). 'Event' is quoted from *Collected Poems*, pp.194-95.

the two translations discussed here, Zhang Fenling's Chinese equivalent of 'xiaxi' 罅隙, indicating a narrow gap, is less satisfactory than Zheng Min's 鄭敏 rendering of 'liefeng' 裂縫, which suggests the cleaving or splitting producing the gap.<sup>19</sup> The rift carrying an implication of a break in human relations may in its geological sense, mean a fault produced by tension on either side of the fault plane, anticipating 'faults' introduced in 1.15. The connotation of split caused by tension is therefore an essential entailment of the metaphor, which is further captured by Zheng Min in her translation of 'A black gap' in stanza 6 as '*heisede duanlie*' 黑色的斷裂 (black break-split), whereas Zhang keeps to her static representation of '*heisede shengou*' 黑色的深溝 (black deep-gap).

Against a background of icy coldness, disharmonious sounds given out by the desolate cries of the owl and sighs of the child, the estranged couple finds physical closeness unbearable--'One touch: it burns and sickens' (1.11). Using an ontological metaphor, the poet visualizes the act of touching as an entity or thing having the destructive power to burn or scorch thereby causing somebody to feel the smart and become sick. Zhang chooses to translate the line into a literal statement by

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19 Zhang Fenling's translation of 'Event' is from *Xiandaishi qishi lu*, pp.245-247. Zheng Min's translation is taken from *One Hundred Modern English Poems*, edited by Mary M.Y. Fung (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1992), pp.399-401.



turning the act of touching into the one being touched: 'yijing chumo: jiu fare zuo'ou' 一經觸摸:就發熱作嘔 (having been touched (by the other), (one) becomes feverish and nauseating). The metaphor however is retained in Zheng Min's translation -- 'chumo yixia: ta ranshao, outu' 觸摸一下: 它燃燒,嘔吐 (Touch once: it burns, vomits), leaving the referent of 'ta' (it) ambiguous. Both translators have been able to bring out the unwholesome aspect of a broken relationship.

In contrast with the wholeness of an ideal unity, seen as a healthy person in full possession of his arms and legs, a disintegrated union is forcefully depicted in the penultimate stanza: 'My limbs, also, have left me./ Who has dismembered us?'. Since the possession of a body with limbs is a most immediate universal experience unmediated by culture, it is not surprising to find that the conceptual metaphor is easily carried over. Indeed both translators use the same terms current in the Chinese language 'sizhi' 四肢 (four limbs) and 'zhijie' 肢解 (cut apart limbs) to translate 'limbs' and 'dismember'. Remembering that *zhijie* is a severe torture in ancient China, readers of the translation may perhaps associate an element of cruelty and pain with the poet's present predicament. The last sentence of the poem 'We touch like cripples', also a novel metaphor, linking the preceding shattering sensation of touching with the later developed idea of a person deprived of the full use of his limbs, is treated differently by the two translators. Zhang translated it as 'women xiang boxingzhe mosuo qianjin' 我

們像跛行者摸索前進 (we grope our way forward like cripples), retaining the image of a person crippled in his legs but substituted the act of touching by that of walking. One may well appreciate her intention of making the action described in agreement with a lame person, since in Chinese 'boxingshe' does not carry the wider implication of 'a person who is or seems disabled or deficient in some way' (*The Collins Dictionary*, p.369) as 'cripple' does. But in doing so she missed the metaphor of touch contributing to the central unity metaphor. Zheng Min in rendering 'cripple' as 'canjiren' 殘疾人 (the disabled), while capturing the wider meaning of cripple in terms of a maimed or defective relationship, solves its collocational problem with the verb 'mochu' 摸觸 (touch), with which she translates 'touch'. Her version consistently builds up the unity metaphor, which is especially important when it occurs in the concluding line of the poem.

But by far the most striking metaphor in the poem is the ring, which can be seen as a unity metaphor in which the wholeness rather than the integrated parts are highlighted:

When apple bloom ices the night  
 I walk in a ring,  
 A groove of old faults, deep and bitter. (ll.13-15)

The lines are built up of a cluster of metaphors: MARRIAGE IS A RING and MARRIAGE IS A JOURNEY, the latter of which subsumes ERRORS FORM A GROOVE. The ring as a token of marriage (suggested by its contextual



association with apple blossom, symbol of love and weddings), which by virtue of its perfect round shape, signifies unity, wholeness, and eternity. This is seen against 'ring' as a circular path (more specifically 'groove') of endless 'faults' in the word's double sense of 'failings or errors' and 'fractures in the earth's crust'. The dissolution of the marriage vow of eternal love has turned the wedding ring into a path of endless repetition of offences and mistakes, in its turn serving to alienate the partners ever more, thus breaking the continuity and unity of marriage. The main obstacle in translation lies in the absence of polysemy matching the two meanings required in the Chinese equivalents for 'ring' and 'faults', so that the two trains of thought activated in the metaphorical complex cannot be called to mind by using one and the same word. The double entendre of the former is especially crucial to the existence of the metaphorical complex. Zhang, as usual, finds her way out by rendering 11.14-15 into a literal statement 'wo rao quan er xing, / gulaode guoshi guding fanyingzhe, shenke qie tongku' 我繞圈而行，／古老的過失固定反應著，深刻且痛苦 (I walk in a circular path, / Old mistakes reacting in a fixed way, deep and painful). Recognizing the importance of the metaphors, Zheng Min painstakingly retains them by building the two meanings of 'ring' into the lines, forgoing the less important geological implication of 'faults': 'wo tazhe jiezhide yuanguan sanbu, / yige jiuguo, shenhen mochengde guzhe' 我踏着戒指的圓圈散步，／一個舊過、深恨磨成的故轍 (I take a walk treading on the circular path of the

finger-ring / An old track worn by past errors and deep bitterness). The translator sets the whole scenario for the activation of the two courses of thought by making explicit what is implicit in the original.

The image of the ring recurs in a number of Plath's poems. In 'The Couriers' (p.247), written on 4 November 1962, it occurs in the form of a question in the third stanza, being the third riddle brought by the couriers:

A ring of gold with the sun in it?  
Lies. Lies and a grief.

The riddle can easily be unravelled if one remembers that Plath likes to think of the sense of well-being brought about by love as radiance given out by the sun. She writes in a letter to her mother dated April 29, 1956, during the period when, in the full happiness of being in love, she was contemplating marriage: 'Bodily, I've never been healthier: radiance and love just surge out of me like a sun. I can't wait to set you down in its rays.' (*Letters Home*, p.243) The wedding ring of gold glittering with the sun's rays did promise her conjugal bliss. Readers of her poem may be vaguely aware of the proverb 'all that glitters isn't gold'. Would it be that the wedding ring is not made of gold but some base metal that gives out false lustre? From MARRIAGE IS A RING, MARRIAGE IS GOLD, and MARRIAGE IS RADIANCE one arrives at MARRIAGE/LOVE IS A LIE, with total disillusionment and a feeling of resentment -- 'Lies. Lies and a grief', 'a grief' in the sense of 'a grievance', a wrong committed against her. With moving sadness, the poet concludes in



the last line of the poem: 'Love, love, my season'--that love is as changeable as the seasons. The problem in translating this passage does not lie in the structure of the metaphors, which is not at all complicated, but in the network of implications including the reader's familiarity with Plath's habitual way of conceptualization, knowledge of English proverbs, etc., necessary to establish the connections between metaphors. The Chinese translators find it possible to keep very close to the original. For example, Chen Maiping 陳邁平 translates stanza 3 as follows:<sup>20</sup>

*Huangjin jiezhi zhong you yige taiyang ma?*  
*Huangyan, huangyan he youshang*

黃金戒指中有一個太陽嗎？  
 謊言、謊言和憂傷

(Is there a sun in a gold finger-ring? / Lies, lies and grief.) The reference to the wedding ring is made more specific in the translation. Yet without the supporting framework of metaphorical entailments, the Chinese readers may find it difficult to comprehend the logic behind the question and answer. The riddle would, in most cases, remain a riddle to them.

'Winter Trees' (pp.257-58), a poem written three weeks after 'The Couriers', infuses yet another aspect into the ring image. As the subject is trees, the ring naturally refers also to the annual ring of a tree:

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20 Collected in *Guoji shitan*, first series, edited by Peng Yanjiao (Guilin: Lijiang chubanshe, 1987), pp. 96-97. Chen, however, translated 'a grief' as 'grief', meaning sadness.

Memories growing, ring on ring,  
A series of weddings. (11.4-5)

Jon Rosenblatt sees these two lines as an aspect of fertility: 'the symbolic "wedding" of the past and future of trees through the formation of rings'.<sup>21</sup> Projecting marriage onto the annual rings of trees, the conceptual network is enriched by the entailments of growth and fertility, a prevalent preoccupation of Plath in this poem and elsewhere. To suggest a wedding ring and a tree ring by the same word in Chinese is a linguistic impossibility. To add to that, the translator has to consider collocational and contextual fitness. Susan Bassnett comments on the two quoted lines: 'The compression of imagery in these two lines creates an effect of richness; the word "ring" has connotations of sound, of marriage, of wholeness, of ancient tree trunks enduring through time and, most obviously here, of the immediate comparison with ink and water seeping into blotting paper in circular patterns'.<sup>22</sup> It is understandable therefore that in spite of her sensitivity to linguistic nuances, Zheng Min has to limit herself to the most immediate level of rendering:<sup>23</sup>

*Jiyi zai zengzhang, yiquan die yiquan,  
Yi lianchuande hunli*

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21 Jon Rosenblatt, *Sylvia Plath -- the Poetry of Initiation*, p.103.

22 Susan Bassnett, *Sylvia Plath* (London: Macmillan, 1987), p.118.

23 *One Hundred Modern English Poems*, pp.407-9.



記憶在增長，一圈疊一圈，  
一聯串的婚禮

(Memories are growing, one circle upon another circle, / A series of weddings). A recent translation of the above two lines by Chen Dejin 陳德錦 is almost the same as Zheng's except he uses 'yihuan kou yihuan' 一環扣一環 (one ring locked on to another ring) to render 'ring on ring'.<sup>24</sup> The use of 'huan' could suggest *zhihuan* 指環 (finger ring), invoking references to the wedding ring, yet the word 'kou' denotes that the rings are locked on to one another as in a chain so that the image schemata of concentric circles as of ink and water on blotting paper or of annual growth of tree rings cannot be evoked. The sound connotation of 'ring', associated with wedding bells or with trees is difficult to retain. Plath seems to be fascinated by the resounding echo of the wood after the fall of the axe in a beautifully executed later poem 'Words' (p.270), which also presents the image of forces coming from the centre:

Axes  
After whose stroke the wood rings,  
And the echoes!  
Echoes traveling  
Off from the center like horses.

It is interesting to find in another translation of 'Winter Trees' the attempt to capture the association of 'ring' with the sound of bells and tree rings:

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24 All of Chen Dejin's translations quoted in this chapter are published in *Li Poetry Bimonthly*, no. 172 (December 1992), 92-97 (p.93). Hereafter only the relevant page numbers will be given.

*Jiyi zai zhangda, yilun fu yilunde zhongsheng,  
Yi lianchuande hunli*

記憶在長大，一輪復一輪的鐘聲，  
一連串的婚禮

(Memories are growing, a round and round of bells pealing, / A series of weddings).<sup>25</sup> The translator's strategy is to use the classifier 'lun' (round) to suggest 'nianlun' 年輪 (annual ring of trees). Unfortunately 'yilun' is not normally used to collocate with 'zhongsheng' in modern colloquial Chinese, and in the translation the peal of bells is highlighted at the expense of other aspects of the metaphorical complex.

### 5.3 Object of Love transformed

An important component of the unity metaphor, as we have seen, is the object of love, the counterpart of oneself, found after life-long search and irreplaceable. Enthusiasm, admiration, or adoration may prompt one to exaggerate the qualities found in the beloved to make him up into 'the most wonderful person in the world' as we have seen in 'Mad Girl's Love Song'. Sylvia Plath appears to be perfectly aware of this tendency of someone in love and of herself in particular. An entry in her *Journals* of 1953, the year the poem was written, records her awareness of this tendency: 'I am in danger of wanting my

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25 Quoted from a translation made by Zheng Mingzhu, a student in my final year translation class in 1991, at the University of Hong Kong, with her consent.



personal absolute to be a demigod of a man, and as there aren't many around, I often unconsciously manufacture my own' (*Journals*, p.78). When she met Ted Hughes, 'that big, dark, hunky boy, the only one there huge enough' for her, she regarded him as a god conjured from the sea: 'he sets the sea of my life steady, flooding it with the deep rich color of his mind and his love and constant amaze at his perfect being: as if I had conjured, at last, a god from the slack tides' (*Journals*, July 17, 1957, p.166). She conceptualizes the OBJECT OF LOVE AS A GOD or AS A GIANT/COLOSSUS.<sup>26</sup>

This is made more complicated by her obsession with the loss of her father, who died when she was a child of eight. She believes that 'love is a desperate artifice to take the place of those two original parents who turned out not to be omnisciently right gods' (*Journals*, May 14, 1953, p.79). Romantic love being a substitute for parental love, she warned herself against marrying for the sake of satisfying her 'lust for the knowing of' her 'father' (*Journals*, March 8, 1956, p.129). She speaks of her father as 'the buried male muse and god-creator risen to be' her 'mate in Ted' (*Journals*, May 11, 1958, p.222), at once identifying the OBJECT OF LOVE AS HUSBAND/FATHER.

Her conceptualization of the object of love undergoes

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26 In her poem to Ted Hughes, 'Letter to a Purist', written in 1956, she describes the object of love as 'That grandiose colossus who/ Stood astride/ The envious assaults of sea' (ll.1-3, p.36).

a transformation after love disappoints her. Even though her habitual metaphor of her husband as a giant remains in 'Gulliver' (p.251), it is a bound giant, ensnared by 'the spider men'. She wishes he would 'step off seven leagues' and be restored to his former stature of a true giant. One's understanding of the literary allusion to Jonathon Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is crucial to the interpretation of the poem. I agree with Colin Turbayne that all kinds of allusions, be they literary or historical, are extended or sustained metaphors. I would include these, together with the fable and legend, in the general category of the myth. Colin Turbayne explains as follows: 'The fable, the parable, the allegory, and the myth are, like the model, extended or sustained metaphors. The wave model of light, Aesop's fables, Jesus' parable of the sower, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, The Napoleonic myth, and the myth of volitions ... are stories that we make believe to be true.... They are supported by specially constructed systems of implication'.<sup>27</sup> To put it in Lakoff's terms, one may say that when we have two domains of thought activated, the source domain is taken up by the make-believe world of the myth. The implications of the story generally accepted by members of the culture in which the myth has grown up in part constitute the implicative complex by which the myth will be interpreted. It follows therefore

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27 Colin Murray Turbayne, *The Myth of Metaphor* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1962, paperback edition, 1971), p.19.



that it may not be understood by speakers of a different culture without the support of the relevant system of implications. Zhang Fenling, who transliterates the name 'Gulliver' without giving any hint or footnote, employs a hit-or-miss strategy. To the average educated Chinese reader with a fair exposure to English literature, the scenario of Gulliver being captured and tied down by the six-inch high Lilliputians can easily be called to mind by the poem; otherwise the extended metaphor would fail to work completely.

In speaking about her husband in 'The Swarm' (pp.215-17), written on 7 October 1962, a historical rather than a literary allusion is made use of, and instead of being a giant, he is addressed as the 'little man'-- Napoleon, with 'the hump of Elba on your short back'. Plath expresses her interest in history in an interview with Peter Orr around this time: 'I find myself being more and more fascinated by history and now I find myself reading more and more about history. I am very interested in Napoleon, at the present: I'm very interested in battles, in wars, in Gallipoli, the First World War and so on, and I think that as I age I am becoming more and more historical.'<sup>28</sup> Lacking a knowledge of history, one could hardly make sense of the beekeeper in his metaphorical role of the tyrant who plunders through Europe and of the poet's identification with the swarm, one pawn among the

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28 The interview is dated 30th October 1962. See Peter Orr, *The Poet Speaks: Interviews with contemporary poets* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p.169.

'chess people' manipulated for the great onslaught. The very telling line 'Jealousy can open the blood' (1.3) linking the historical to the autobiographical episodes, is competently translated by Zhang Fenling as '*jidu neng tiaopi shalu*' 嫉妒能挑起殺戮 (jealousy can stir up slaughter)<sup>29</sup>. The metaphor LOVE IS WAR, also pervasive in Chinese culture, is made more explicit by the translation, serving to develop the theme of the poem.

By far the most complex myth recurrent in Plath's poetry is the Oresteia myth. In 'The Colossus' (pp.129-30) she speaks of 'A blue sky out of the Oresteia / Arches above us' (Stanza 4, ll.1-2). Aeschylus' trilogy on the story of Agamemnon, Clytemnestra, and Orestes is often drawn upon to symbolize her obsessive relationship with her father and her husband. Both translators of the poem, Zhang Fenling and Zhao Qiong 趙瓊, simply transliterate the name without explaining the myth.<sup>30</sup> It is highly doubtful what sense the reader would make out of these unfamiliar names.

But Zhang shows a better grasp of the theme of the poem in her translation of the title into '*ju shen xiang*' 巨神像 (huge statue of god), rather than Zhao Qiong's *ju xiang* (huge statue), as the poem is a symbolic attempt to

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29 *Xiandaishi qishi lu*, p.233.

30 *Xiandaishi qishi lu*, pp.227-228; Zhao Qiong and Dao Zi, *Meiguo zibaipai shixuan* (Kuilin: Lijiang chubanshe, 1987), pp.99-100. For the sake of brevity, I shall mention the first translator only whenever their translation is referred to.



reconstitute her father, the imago of a lost god.<sup>31</sup> In a brilliant stroke, Plath identifies her OBJECT OF LOVE (HUSBAND/FATHER) AS GOD AND GIANT. The poet living under the influence of the object of love is summed up in the third last line of the poem : 'My hours are *married* to shadow' (*italics mine*). Zhang's revised version of the line published in *Xiandaishi qishi lu* is as follows: 'wode suiyue weishen yu yinying' 我的歲月委身於陰影 (my days are entrusted to shadow). 'Weishen' implies giving up oneself to the service of somebody superior and more powerful and can be used as a euphemism for 'marrying' somebody. However I find her earlier translation more preferable (*Zhong wai wenxue* 7, no.9, p.164): 'wode suiyue he yinying huxiang jiehe' 我的歲月和陰影互相結合 (my days are united (in wedlock) with shadow). Her choice of 'jiehe' enables her to sustain collocational cohesion as well as to bring in the unity metaphor, showing how thoroughly tied together is the speaker with the male god, the black complementary power of her life. It is noteworthy that the undesirable state of love is symbolized as married to 'shadow' in contrast with the almost translucent world where 'Tree and stone glittered, without shadows' described in 'Love Letter'. By translating the word 'shadow' in both poems as 'yinying' Zhang Fenling allows cross-references to be made, connecting the individual works into one whole.

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31 See Murray M. Schwartz and Christopher Bollas, 'The Absence at the Center: Sylvia Plath and Suicide', *Criticism*, 18, no.4 (fall 1976), 147-172 (p.154).

The most celebrated poem dealing with the theme of father/husband in intense love/hate relationship with the poet is 'Daddy' (pp.222-24), written on 12 October 1962. Plath comments on this poem in a reading for BBC radio:

Here is a poem spoken by a girl with an Electra complex. Her father died while she thought he was God. Her case is complicated by the fact that her father was also a Nazi and her mother very possibly part Jewish. In the daughter the two strains marry and paralyse each other -- she has to act out the awful little allegory once over before she is free of it.<sup>32</sup>

'Daddy' then is about enacting the 'murder' of her dead father in order to free herself of his influence. The 'colossus' is now reduced to a man, a Nazi, through whose image the poet identifies her private suffering with that of the Jews at the extermination camps of the Second World War. But as the poem unfolds, one comes to realize that the image of the father also entails that of the husband; it is two in one. Stanza 11 describes the father/husband as devil: 'A cleft in your chin instead of your foot / But no less a devil for that'. The intelligibility of the lines depends on the knowledge that devils are supposed to have a cleft foot according to Western folk belief. Of the five translators of the poem Zhao Yiheng 趙毅衡 and Wu Lao 吳勞 provide adequate footnotes explaining this and conveying other relevant information necessary for grasping the general intent of

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32 Quoted from Susan Bassnett, *Sylvia Plath*, p.88.



the poem.<sup>33</sup> After three stanzas, the father/husband is said to have 'a love of the rack and the screw. / And I said I do, I do'. Under the power of the torturer, the speaker is reduced to the position of the culprit who can only comply with whatever confession forced upon her. But the utterance 'I do, I do' is identical with that given at marriage in answer to the question: 'Do you take this man to be your lawful wedded husband?'. The image schemata of the scene of torturing and the wedding ceremony superimpose on each other. It is interesting that Zhang Fenling and Wu Lao translate the above as a marital vow 'wo yuanyi, wo yuanyi' 我願意, 我願意 (I am willing, I am willing), whereas Zhao Yiheng translates it as 'wo zhaogong, wo zhaogong' 我招供, 我招供 (I confess, I confess).<sup>34</sup> There appears no way of finding a single expression in Chinese that covers the contextual range of both 'I take you to be my spouse' and 'I confess'. Hence either the wedding ceremony or the torturing scene is evoked by the translation.

In the next stanza the protagonist is seen as a vampire:

If I've killed one man, I've killed two--

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33 See Zhao Yiheng, *Meiguo xiandai shixuan* (Beijing: Waiguo wenxue chubenshe, 1985), pp.610-615, hereafter abbreviated as Zhao Yiheng; and Wu Lao's translation in *Gudude meigui -- Dangdai waiguo shuqingshixuan* (Shanghai: Shanghai yiwén chubanshe, 1986), pp.290-94, hereafter abbreviated as Wu Lao.

34 *Xiandaishi qishi lu*, p.226; Wu Lao, p.293; Zhao Yiheng, p.614.

The vampire who said he was you  
And drank my blood for a year,  
Seven years, if you want to know.

This identification of two men in one confirms the speaker's earlier comparison of Daddy to 'the black man who / Bit my pretty heart in two' (stanzas 11-12) whom she 'made a model of' her lost father.<sup>35</sup> Again the translating poses no difficulty except for the underlying horror of the thought. Indeed it is possible that one of the translators, Zhuang Yan 莊彥, finds the whole poem so offensive that he renders both the title and all the words 'daddy' found in the poem into 'mangzhu' 盲蛛 (daddy longlegs), letting the insect rather than one's father suffer the atrocities levelled at him.<sup>36</sup>

Plath's idea of the involvement of the dead in the affairs of the living, more specifically the continual life of the father in the husband, finds expression in a poem written during the second year of her marriage. In 'All the Dead Dears' (pp.70-71) written in 1957, the second last stanza goes like this:

All the long gone darlings: they  
Get back, though, soon,  
Soon: be it by wakes, weddings,  
Childbirths or a family barbecue:

35 Schwartz and Bollas suggest that 'the desire for the father also becomes a search for him in other men, what Plath calls "models" of him', quoting the following lines from 'Daddy': 'I made a model of you, / A man in black with a Meinkampf look' ('The Absence at the Center', pp.157-58).

36 Zhuang Yan, *Ershi shiji meiguo shixuan* (Shenyang: Chunfeng chubanshe, 1990), pp.538-541; hereafter abbreviated as Zhuang Yan.



Zhuang Yan misrepresents the lines totally in his translation (p.531):

*haohao dangdang de chongr:*  
*tamen huilaile, zongran henkuai, henkuai:*  
*rang tamen xinglai, jiehun,*  
*sheng er yunü, xiangshou jiating yecan:*

浩浩蕩蕩的寵兒：  
 他們回來了，縱然很快、很快：  
 讓他們醒來，結婚，  
 生兒育女，享受家庭野餐：

(The enormous and mighty darlings:/ They come back, though very fast, very fast:/ Let them wake up, marry,/ Raise children, enjoy family picnic:) He describes the dead waking up, getting married, raising children and leading a second life of their own. This to be sure is more easily comprehensible to the Chinese reader familiar with the idea of re-incarnation, than Plath's own innovation of MARRIAGE IS THE RETURN OF THE DEAD. However the latter is uppermost in Plath's mind as can be seen in the lines in the last stanza: 'Each skulled-and-crossboned Gulliver/ Riddled with ghosts'. The image of Gulliver is already present in the Plathian mythology.

To pursue further the image of the husband as father, we shall examine 'Man in Black' (pp.119-200), which Plath calls 'the only "love" poem in my book', written after a visit to her father's grave in Winthrop in 1959 (*Journals*, p.300). She addresses the protagonist in the following lines:

And you, across those white  
 Stones, strode out in your dead  
 Black coat, black shoes, and your  
 Black hair till there you stood, (stanzas 5-6)

In the same entry in her *Journals* she writes: 'The "dead black" in my poem may be a transference from the visit to my father's grave'. 'Dead' then is a key word, not only qualifying 'black', the colour of mourning, but also indicative of the relationship inherent in the lover-husband-father. Zhao Yiheng gives the following translation (pp.602-3):

*er ni, cong zhexie baisedede shitou*

*zhijian, maibu zouchu, chuanzhe  
wuguangzede heidayi, heixie,  
heitoufa, zuihou ni zhanding*

而你，從這些白色的石頭

之間，邁步走出，穿着  
無光澤的黑大衣，黑鞋，  
黑頭髮，最後你站定

(And you, from among these white stones/ strode out, wearing/ lack-lustre black coat, black shoes,/ black hair, and finally stood still). The rich implication of 'dead' is lost in the very tame adjective 'wu guangze de' 無光澤的 (lack-lustre), restricting it to a descriptive surface level. The metaphor of OBJECT OF LOVE AS RETURN OF THE DEAD fails to come through.

#### 5.4 LOVE IS FIRE metaphor extended

The cold and white landscape in 'Event' when true love is gone, points to the absence of heat and colour, both attributes of fire, a central metaphor against which the intensity of love is measured. The LOVE IS FIRE metaphorical concept is grounded in our physiological



reaction of love felt as bodily heat, an increase in heart beat, and a rush of blood to the face. In her *Journals* Plath speaks of experiencing love as fire. Before she meets Ted Hughes, love is 'the delicious animal fire' (p.42) that 'flames up' desire in her (p.68), a 'blazing love' (p.109) that burns her to ash (p.132). After she meets her true love, she speaks of her experience in like terms: 'He uses me-- uses all of me so I am lit and glowing with love like a fire, and this is all I looked for all my life-- to be able to give of my love, my spontaneous joy, unreservedly, with no holding back for fear of lies, misuse, betrayal (*Journals*, pp.212-213)'. It is obvious that what she wants is nothing short of being totally consumed by the fire of love, a giving of her entire self, to be received and reciprocated in honourable fashion by her lover. It is revealing to find in the same entry earlier on she writes: 'I am, at bottom, simple, credulous, feminine and loving to be mastered, cared for -- but I will kill with my mind, my ice-eye, anyone who is weak, false, sickly in soul'. In the face of betrayal by a false lover, her burning passion, assuming its opposite quality, will turn into an instrument of revenge, and she will kill with her 'ice-eye'. This opens up possibilities for her individual conceptualization of the LOVE IS FIRE metaphor. In her early poems, she adheres in the main to the metaphorical entailments of LOVE IS FIRE as described by Kövecses in *The Language of Love* (pp.42-48). However in her late poems she extends the conventional metaphorical

projections to new dimensions for the purpose of ordering and manipulating her intense emotional experience.

'Poppies in July' (p.203), written on 20 July 1962, is interesting in the image of the scarlet poppies as 'hell flames', associated with the 'harm' done in the First World War. Seeing the flowers in terms of the human body, Plath compares them to the wrinkled 'skin of a mouth', 'a mouth just bloodied', and to 'bloody skirts'. They give out nauseous fumes inducing people to sleep. In a state of 'stasis', the poet exclaims: 'If my mouth could marry a hurt like that!' (stanza 6), linking the pain caused by her marriage, or rather, break-up of marriage, with the 'hurt' of the flaming poppies. Again the inability to touch as a result of the disintegration of the unity metaphor is invoked effectively. Chen Maiping translates the line into '*ruguo wode zuichun neng nayang qinjin shangkou gaiyou duohao*' 如果我的嘴唇能那樣親近傷口該有多好 (How nice if my lips could be so close to the wound).<sup>37</sup> By omitting the word 'marry', the translator fails to establish the connection between BURNING IS PAIN and a frustrated love experience. Chen Dejin's translation, '*jiaru wode zui neng yu zheyangde shangkou jiehe*' 假如我的嘴能與這樣的傷口結合! (If my mouth could unite with such a wound!), makes use of 'jiehe' to suggest 'marry' and thereby structures the metaphorical

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37 *Guoji shitan*, vol.1, edited by Peng Yanjiao (Kuilin: Lijiang chubanshe, 1987), p.100.



implications in such a way as to prompt the reader's expected response.<sup>38</sup>

Her second poppy poem in the same year 'Poppies in October' (p.240) further develops the metaphorical concepts from LOVE IS FIRE and LOVE/FIRE IS PAIN to LOVE/FIRE IS REVELATION:

A gift, a love gift

....

O my God, what am I

That these late mouths should cry open

In a forest of frost, in a dawn of cornflowers.

(ll.4, 10-12)

The position of 'open' in line 11 opens up a host of possibilities in the crying of the mouth-poppy-flame image. Zhao Yiheng (p.609) translates the lines into

*nengshi zhexie chilaide zui zhangkou dahan*  
*zai ningshuangde senlin, zai shichejude qingchen*

能使這些遲來的嘴張口大喊  
在凝霜的森林，在矢車菊的清晨？

(To make these late-coming mouths open and cry loudly/ in a forest of frost, in the early morning of cornflowers?)

Chen Dejin (p.97) gives a similar treatment:

*zhexie siqude zuiba dou wei wo zhangkou jiaohan,*  
*zai zhe jieshuang de senlin, zhe shichejude liming*

這些死去的嘴巴都爲我張口叫喊，  
在這結霜的森林，這矢車菊的黎明？

(These dead mouths all open and cry for me, in this forest of frost, this dawn of cornflowers?) The description of the mouths 'open and cry' cannot bring out the concept of LOVE/FIRE IS REVELATION.

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38 Chen Dejin, p.96.

A longer poem, 'Fever 103°' (pp.231-32), written a week earlier, is constructed in accordance with the underlying framework of love as fire. It is a poem on purification by fire.<sup>39</sup> The poet explains, 'This poem is about two kinds of fire -- the fires of hell, which merely agonize, and the fires of heaven, which purify. During the poem, the first sort of fire suffers itself into the second.'<sup>40</sup> The speaker in a state of high fever, is visualized as burning, enduring the two kinds of fire. The fires of hell occupy the first half of the poem. 'The tongues of hell' are identified with the tongues of Cerberus, the three-headed dog guarding the entrance to Hades, which, the poet says, is incapable of licking clean the taint of sin associated with the body. The name Cerebus poses a problem, as a mere transliteration may not call to mind the characteristics of the mythical beast. Zhuang Yan (pp.542-44) simplifies matters by substituting 'san tou gou' 三頭狗 (three-headed dog) for Cerberus. Zhang Fenling (*Xiandaishi qishi lu*, pp.236-239) retains the proper name and amplifies 'the

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39 Sylvia Plath wrote to her mother on September 24, 1962, one month before 'Fever 103°' was written: 'It is the uncertainty, week after week, that has been such a torture. And, of course, the desire to hang on to the last to see if something, anything, could be salvaged.... I will try ...to purge myself of this awful experience.' (*Letters Home*, p.462)

40 Quoted from Introductory notes to a reading of the poem prepared for the BBC Third Programme, in Charles Newman, *The Art of Sylvia Plath: A Symposium* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p. 62.



gate' into '*mingfude damenkou*' 冥府的大門口 (the main gate of Hades). It can be seen that each translator tries to fill out the picture suggested by the mythological name. Judging by the underlying metaphorical concept of LOVE IS HELL FIRE in the poem, the inclusion of the implication of Hades is more important than other aspects of the myth.

The words 'tinder' (1.8), 'snuffed candle' (1.10), and 'smokes' (1.11 and 1.14) serve to suggest the kindling and extinguishing of fire. In their translations, Zhuang Yan missed the image of the first and Zhang Fenling, that of the second. The dying fire cannot be revived, and the speaker mourns for her lost love and expresses her misgivings:

Love, love, the low smokes roll  
From me like Isadora's scarves, I'm in a fright

One scarf will catch and anchor in the wheel  
(11.11-13)

Comparing the low smokes to Isadora's scarf, the poet makes allusion to the pioneer American modern dancer's death. Isadora Duncan was strangled when her scarf caught in the wheel of her car. The poet may be referring to her lingering love, which she fears may bind her to such painful existence that is likened to death. She may also be thinking of the liberating spirit of Isadora Duncan she aspires to, essential to the process of purification and rebirth in the poem. The reader's interpretation of the metaphor will in part depend on his knowledge of the

myth and its implications. It is very unlikely that the transliterated name which Zhuang Yan provides without giving any hints will evoke the associations necessary for making full sense of the metaphorical implications. Zhang Fenling's brief description of Duncan's <sup>fatal</sup> accident in a footnote should prove helpful in bridging the information gap.

The strategic position of the I-speaker burning all night at the beginning of the second half of the poem starts the process of purification by fire. The image of fire flickering on and off as love and passion wax and wane, is carried into the following stanzas:

Darling, all night  
I have been flickering, off, on, off, on.  
The sheets grow heavy as a lecher's kiss. (11.28-30)

Does not my heat astound you. And my light.  
All by myself I am a huge camellia  
Glowing and coming and going, flush on flush.  
(11.40-42)

Zhang is more intent on bringing out the light image, translating 1.29 into 'wo dou shanshuo bu ding, an, ming, an, ming' 我都閃爍不定, 暗, 明, 暗, 明 (I am glimmering inconstantly, dark, bright, dark, bright), and 'Glowing' in 1.42 into 'shanshuo' (glimmer), echoing the former stanza. Perhaps in an effort to achieve collocational smoothness, Zhuang Yan renders 'flickering' into 'yaoye' 搖曳 (shaking) and 'flush on flush' into 'huanglai huangqu' 晃來晃去 (swaying to and fro), with the result of surfacing movement rather than light.

But the light image is thematically important. The



speaker's suffering through fever or her hell-on-earth caused by unfaithfulness in love ('adulterers') is rapidly enlarged to embrace human catastrophe -- to include destruction by atomic bomb ('Hiroshima' in 1.26) and perhaps the Holocaust in 11.37-39.<sup>41</sup> And this is effectively done through the light image:

I am a lantern--

My head a moon  
Of Japanese paper, my gold beaten skin  
Infinitely delicate and infinitely expensive.  
(11.36-39)

Zhang Fenling's translation of '*ribenzhi zuode / yueliang*' 日本紙做的/月亮 (moon made of Japanese paper) brings out the comparison of the poet's head with a Japanese globe-shaped paper lantern, luminous as her skin is, the latter having been beaten and expanded<sup>42</sup>. Zhuang Yan again seems to have missed the point in his two dimensional portrayal of '*Ribenzhi shang de yueliang*' 日本紙上的月亮 (moon on Japanese paper). By adding a moral dimension to the suffering by fire, the speaker emerges purified, having identified herself with 'chastity, sanctity, on the one hand, and light, gold, heat, and

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41 P.R. King in '"Dying is an Art": The poetry of Sylvia Plath' suggests that 1.26 may allude to the film *Hiroshima Mon Amour*. See his *Nine Contemporary Poets: A Critical Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1974), p.175.

42 These lines may be compared to 11.4-5 of 'Lady Lazarus': 'my skin / Bright as a Nazi lampshade', referring to the practice of the Nazis in using the skin of some Jewish victims to make lampshades.

lightness on the other', in preparation for her final ascension.<sup>43</sup> Disintegrating into 'a pure acetylene / Virgin', she achieves an ultimate purified state, and rises to Paradise. It is unfortunate that both Zhuang Yan and Zhang Fenling as well as two other translators Zhao Qiong and Meng Meng all render 'Virgin' into 'chunü' 處女 (virgin), depriving the text of the idea of salvation inherent in the religious allusion to the Virgin Mary, consistent with the theme of resurrection. The poet has thus gone through the following stages: from LOVE IS HELL FIRE to LOVE IS CELESTIAL FIRE via BURNING BY CELESTIAL FIRE IS PURIFICATION to transform the mental experience of LOVE IS DEATH into LOVE IS RESURRECTION.

### 5.5 LOVE/DEATH IS RESURRECTION

The last two metaphors discussed are most innovative in Plath's conceptualization of her love experience. She perceives LOVE AS DEATH, and since DEATH IS REBIRTH achieved through the purification of her suffering, LOVE/DEATH IS RESURRECTION, which may or may not be brought about by FIRE. We shall therefore further explore these metaphorical concepts.

When Plath was waiting desperately for Ted Hughes before they met, she writes: 'I am sick, sick. With this desperate fury.... Love turns, lust turns, into the death

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43 See Thanh-Binh Nguyen, 'A stylistic analysis of Sylvia Plath's semantics', *Language and Style*, 11, no.2 (Spring 1978), 69-81 (p.75).



urge' (*Journals*, March 10, 1956, p.133). To her, unfulfilled or frustrated love is death. However as an intelligent human being she has to take control of her most terrible experience and find a way out. Plath says, 'I believe that one should be able to control and manipulate experiences, even the most terrifying--like madness, being tortured, this kind of experience--and one should be able to manipulate these experiences with an informed and intelligent mind'.<sup>44</sup> True to her beliefs she has attempted to transform her most trying love experience into one from which strength and new life may burst forth.

'Lady Lazarus' (pp.244-47) is a poem about her own resurrection -- the poet having the power of coming back from the dead. The person referred to is Lazarus of Bethany, raised from the dead by Jesus Christ (St. John's gospel, chapter 11). It is quite obvious from the beginning of the poem that the poet takes upon herself the role of Jesus Christ to work the miracle on herself: 'I manage it -- / A sort of walking miracle'. The poem cannot possibly refer to Lazarus the beggar (St. Luke's gospel, chapter 16) as is mistaken by Zhuang Yan, who translates the title into '*qigai furen*' 乞丐夫人 (Madam beggar). Other translators, with the exception of Wu Lao and Shen Rui 沈睿, all transliterate the proper name without further ado, letting the biblical

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44 Quoted from A. Alvarez, 'Sylvia Plath' in *The Art of Sylvia Plath: A symposium*, edited by Charles Newman, p.64.

story be guessed at or missed. Yet Shen Rui's footnote is rather misleading, giving a statement, quite unfounded, that Lazarus stood up among the dead, speaking at length on the impulse to commit suicide.<sup>45</sup>

Commenting on the protagonist of the poem, Plath says: 'The speaker is a woman who has the great and terrible gift of being reborn. The only trouble is, she has to die first. She is the Phoenix, the libertarian spirit, what you will. She is also just a good, plain resourceful woman.'<sup>46</sup> Plath asserts that an ordinary woman has in her the power of renewal, drawing upon the biblical story aforementioned and the myth of the phoenix. In the latter case, this mythical Arabian bird is noted for its resurrection to life from death every five hundred years. The old phoenix is said to make a funeral pyre and burn itself to death from which the new phoenix arises.<sup>47</sup> 'Dying is an art', as she says in the poem. Hers is a death and rebirth by fire, through which she wishes to remake herself. Putting herself in the same predicament as the Jews, a race which the Nazi attempted to wipe out, she sees her skin becoming a

45 See the footnote on his translation collected in *Waiguo ershi shiji chunshuqingshi jinghua*, edited by Wang Jiabin 王家新 and Tang Xiaodu 唐晓渡 (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 1992), p.75.

46 Quoted from Susan Bassnett, *Sylvia Plath*, p.115.

47 See *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*, edited by M.C. Howatson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, second edition, 1989), p.437.



lampshade, her foot a paperweight, and her face 'a featureless, fine/ Jew linen' (ll.8-9). In a stifling love relationship, she feels the danger of being reduced to an object without human identity, just as the prospective wife in 'The Applicant' is a mere instrument of service to her husband and the treasured bride in 'Purdah', an object of exchange possessed by her master. This victim

wishes to subvert all the conventions in the male-dominated world to liberate herself through her suffering and purification by fire:

Ash, ash--  
 You poke and stir.  
 Flesh, bone, there is nothing there--

A cake of soap,  
 A wedding ring.  
 A gold filling.

Herr God, Herr Lucifer  
 Beware  
 Beware

Out of the ash  
 I rise with my red hair  
 And I eat men like air. (last 4 stanzas)

Transformed by the painful experience into ashes, the residue of her being <sup>nevertheless</sup> still contains the wedding ring, something which cannot be burnt away. She addresses her arch enemy as Herr God and Herr Lucifer, pointing to the Nazi origin of her husband/father as God/devil, threatening to overthrow them with her power of resurrection, bringing in the metaphor LOVE IS REVENGE.

Zheng Min on the whole succeeds in maintaining a colloquial tone appropriate to 'light verse', enhancing

the absurdity of the situation as the poem progresses and highlighting the threatening pronouncement of the final images:

hui, hui--  
 ni tongzhe, fanzhe  
 rou, gutou, zhexie dou meiyou le

yikuai feizao  
 yige jiehun jiezhi  
 yike jinya

shangdi xiansheng, mogui xiansheng  
 xiaoxin  
 xiaoxin

cong huiduili  
 wo shengqi, hong toufa  
 wo ch ren xiang xi kongqi

灰，灰  
 你捶着，翻着  
 肉、骨頭，這些都沒有了

一塊肥皂  
 一個結婚戒指  
 一顆金牙

上帝先生，魔鬼先生  
 小心  
 小心

從灰堆裡  
 我升起，紅頭髮  
 我吃人像吸空氣。

(Ash, ash--/ You poking, stirring/ Flesh, bone, these are  
 all gone--/ A piece of soap/ A wedding ring/ A gold  
 tooth/ Mr God, Mr Devil/ Take care/ Take care/ From the  
 pile of ash/ I rise, red-haired/I eat men like breathing  
 air.)<sup>48</sup>

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 48 Collected in *Oumei xiandaipai shiji*, edited by Dong Sen (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1989), p.89.



One can see that the lines are closely translated with all the images present, except perhaps neglecting the German origin of 'Herr', for which Wu Lao remedies by explaining in a footnote. The last line 'And I eat men like air' is rendered by Wu Lao (p.290) as '*wo chi nanren jiuxiang huxi kongqi*' 我吃男人就像呼吸空氣 (I eat males like breathing air). Instead of translating 'men' into an unmarked category 'ren' (human beings) as Zheng Min does, Wu and two other translators choose to specify that it is '*nanren*', the males, that the resurrected female will destroy. By his/her choice of words the translator directs the reader's interpretation of the metaphors. Such a choice has to be made because of the opposition pairing of '*nanren*' (male human) and '*nüren*' 女人 (female human), the former not being synonymous with 'ren' (human being). The implicative complex for understanding the metaphors in the last two stanzas is very complicated. The reader of the translation has to recognize the allusion to the phoenix's rebirth from its ashes and the demonic association with Satan. 'My red hair' in the penultimate line serves to combine the two images together as the phoenix is supposed to have red (*phoenix*) and gold plumage (*The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*, p.437), and the devil is thought to have red hair. The association of 'Herr God, Herr Lucifer' with the Nazis adds a further dimension to Plath's mythical implications, but as the German word 'Herr' has not been adequately dealt with by all the translators, this level of meaning is likely to be

overlooked. The words 'Beware/ Beware', to a reader familiar with Coleridge's poetry may bring to mind the magical power of the Ancient Mariner. It is quite impossible that echoes of 'The Ancient Mariner' will be recognized in the Chinese translated lines even though the reader may have read Coleridge's original poem or its Chinese translation. The compelling power of the resurrected woman is therefore lost. Lastly, owing to the lexical set associated with the word 'ren', it is up to the translator to leave the denotative meaning of 'men' ambiguous or to highlight the image of this all-powerful God-Satan transformed woman reborn into the world of *male* violence threatening to overcome *men* with equal brutality.

Love as revenge and Death as transformation and spiritual resurrection of the wife dehumanized to an object recur in 'Purdah' (pp.242-44), written in the same period. The woman made from 'The agonized/ Side of green Adam' (ll.3-4) is not his equal, but is dominated and contained by him. Yet in her confinement she initiates her process of liberation:

I shall unloose  
One feather, like the peacock (Stanza 13)

.....  
I shall unloose  
One note (Stanza 14)

Eventually the released energy breaks forth in violence and destruction in the last two stanzas:

I shall unloose--



From the small jeweled  
Doll he guards like a heart--

The lioness,  
The shriek in the bath,  
The cloak of holes.

Death in this case is not the death of the speaker but the act of killing the oppressor, bringing about triumphant release. The lioness in Plathian myth is associated with 'God's lioness' in 'Ariel' (written on 27 October 1962), her fully liberated spirit and her favourite horse in one. In the last two lines a Greek myth is hidden: when her husband Agamemnon, king of Mycenae, returned from the Trojan war with his concubine Cassandra, Clytemnestra killed him in the bath. The woman cast in the role of a jewelled plaything, a treasured possession of her husband, has the queenly power in her, whose release will bring about the destruction of her tyrannical master, resulting in her total liberation and transformation. As the myth is alluded to and not fully narrated in the poem, Zheng Min's almost word for word translation can only present a fragmentary picture:

*Yizhi mushi,  
Na yushi zhong de jianjiao,  
Na baikong qianchuang de doupeng.*<sup>49</sup>

一隻母獅，  
那浴室中的尖叫，  
那百孔千瘡的斗篷。

(A lioness, / the shriek in the bathroom, / the cloak of gaping wounds ). To provide some guidance to her readers the translator summarizes the Clytemnestra story in a

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49 *One Hundred Modern English Poems*, p.407.

note. Yet the implications of the myth vary from culture to culture and from person to person. While it may arouse horror and revulsion in some readers in Western culture, a feminist reading sees it as 'a distinct roar of rage over the condition of women' and entirely justified.<sup>50</sup> When the myth is interpreted against the traditional ethical and linguistic background of Chinese culture, the reader may have a different set of expectations. The lioness, especially when it is associated with the image of a wife, may call to mind a very common idiomatic phrase 'he dong shi hou' 河東獅吼 (the roar of the lioness from the east of the river), alluding to the story of the wife notorious for being fierce and jealous. Such qualities, to say the least, are quite contrary to the traditional virtues expected of a Chinese woman, let alone the immoral act of murdering one's husband. The metaphor, instead of signifying the liberation of energy necessary for the woman's spiritual resurrection, may to a Chinese, indicate moral depravity foreboding damnation. So much for intertextual associations and cultural norms which might affect a reader's expectations. There is of course the factor of individual disposition. Zheng Min's response to the image of the 'lioness', for instance, is very different from what would normally be expected, <sup>by a patriarchal society</sup> from a conservative-minded monolingual Chinese living in a closed culture.

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50 See Butscher's *Sylvia Plath: Method and Madness*, p.367.



Zheng feels <sup>that</sup> a translation must of necessity leave the imprint of the translator's characteristic use of language. She speaks of her conceptualization of the lion, a key image in a sequence of her own poems, as an imprisoned and repressed life force, breaking out from the unconscious to return to nature. In the Chinese context it signifies the resistance to domination by dogmatism and is something extremely beautiful.<sup>51</sup> Zheng Min as receptor of the original text and author of the translation presents one way of reading. There are as many possibilities of response as there are varying individual dispositions.

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<sup>51</sup> Personal communication in May 1993.

# CHAPTER SIX

## CONCLUSION TO PART II

The discussion in chapter 5 has shown that Sylvia Plath's metaphors of love afford a way of perception into her inner world of imaginative reality. Her metaphors are not isolated but form organized systems, as can be seen from their intricate structure within the same poem and across a number of works. In recognition of this I have examined the metaphorical structure in detail in a limited number of poems (complete text of selected poems together with translations given in Appendix III) and compared metaphorical concepts in related works. Owing to the concentration of the available Chinese translations on her late poetry, my study focuses more on the metaphorical concepts of love as seen in these poems, which belong to the 'perverted' model of love, than on the conventional metaphors. Her early poems embodying the ideal model are examined briefly, providing a norm against which the 'perversion' is measured. The metaphors examined in Plath's poetry are listed in two categories as follows:

Ideal model	Perverted model
MARRIAGE/LOVE IS UNITY	BROKEN MARRIAGE/LOVE IS DISINTEGRATION
MARRIAGE/LOVE IS WHOLESOME	BROKEN MARRIAGE/LOVE IS SICKNESS
MARRIAGE/LOVE IS A RING	BROKEN MARRIAGE/LOVE IS PAIN



MARRIAGE/LOVE IS A JOURNEY

MARRIAGE/LOVE IS GOLD

MARRIAGE/LOVE IS RADIANCE

MARRIAGE/LOVE IS ETERNAL

OBJECT OF LOVE IS SELF'S  
OWN CREATION

OBJECT OF LOVE IS A GOD

OBJECT OF LOVE IS  
A GIANT/COLOSSUS

LOVE IS MADNESS

LOVE IS MAGIC

LOVE IS BLIND

LOVE IS LIFE-GIVING

LOVE IS AWAKENING

LOVE IS LIGHT

LOVE IS GROWTH

LOVE IS SELF-FULFILMENT

LOVE IS TRANSCENDENCE

LOVE IS PURIFICATION

LOVE IS SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

LOVE IS A GIFT FROM GOD

LOVE IS FIRE

BROKEN MARRIAGE/LOVE IS  
DISMEMBERMENT

MARRIAGE/LOVE IS ERROR

MARRIAGE/LOVE IS A LIE

LOVE IS SEASONAL

OBJECT OF LOVE IS A DEVIL

OBJECT OF LOVE IS VAMPIRE

OBJECT OF LOVE IS A  
BOUND GIANT

OBJECT OF LOVE IS A  
LITTLE MAN

OBJECT OF LOVE IS A  
TORTURER

OBJECT OF LOVE IS A  
TYRANT

OBJECT OF LOVE IS  
HUSBAND/ FATHER

MARRIAGE IS THE RETURN OF  
THE DEAD

LOVE IS WAR

LOVE IS HELL FIRE

LOVE IS CELESTIAL FIRE

LOVE IS REVELATION

LOVE IS PURIFICATION

LOVE IS LIBERATION

LOVE IS DEATH

LOVE/DEATH IS REVENGE

LOVE/DEATH IS  
RESURRECTION

The metaphors in the above list by no means include  
all the metaphors one may find in the two models, as

their sampling is limited by the availability of the Chinese translations. It is illuminating to note the way Plath manipulates the extended and innovative metaphors in the perverted model to recover metaphors in the ideal model now lost to her. For instance LOVE IS PURIFICATION is present in both models. Plath's spiritual orientation of the ideal model of love entails the life-giving, soul-transforming power of love conceptualized as a process of purification. In this connection Zhang Fenling's rendering of 'soul-shift' into '*huanxinde linghun*' (newly-changed soul) in 'Love Letter' is significant in highlighting the soul-transforming element of the metaphorical entailment of LOVE IS SPIRITUAL RENEWAL. When love has deteriorated, Plath likewise attains purification and spiritual renewal by manipulating the LOVE IS FIRE metaphors. With her new life she also achieves a rebirth of identity (a new and wholesome identity recovered from the dehumanized object to which the stifling love relationship has reduced her), whereby the all-important fulfilment of the self (conceptualized as LOVE IS SELF-FULFILMENT and LOVE IS GROWTH in the ideal model) is resolved.

The centrality of the unity metaphor and the presence of the LOVE IS FIRE metaphor in the English and Chinese cultures render their translatability possible. Both metaphors are grounded in our bodily experience. On this common basis, extensions of the underlying model of LOVE IS UNITY-- namely, 'rift', 'fault', and 'gap' as split of a unified whole, 'touching' as forming a unity, 'ring' as



fully-integrated whole, and 'dismemberment' as disintegrated unity are made. Likewise, starting from the LOVE IS FIRE model, the pleasantness in fulfilled love is replaced by pain in a frustrated love experience, and agony suffered in Hell fire is transcended through purification by celestial fire to achieve resurrection from death. Such extensions built on the unused or less used parts of the metaphors would not be difficult to comprehend, assuming that human beings share a general conceptualizing capacity.

However her innovative metaphors drawing on personal beliefs in combination with unresolved obsessions in her private life prove most difficult to get across. A case in point is her obsession with the Electra complex, a modern concept <sup>with a basis in traditional</sup> Western culture, which she utilizes to formulate her love-hate relations with her object of love as husband/father. She comes up with a novel conception of MARRIAGE IS THE RETURN OF THE DEAD, an idea so foreign to one translator that he substitutes it with the concept of re-incarnation in his rendering of 'All the Dead Dears'.

Her metaphors are rendered more complex by the use of allusions to history, religion, literature and

myth, contributing in the end to the fabrication of a mythological system of her own. Allusions and myths as they are used in the poems are in culture-specific shorthand, making the lines richly associative and meaningful. Readers from a different culture may be informed of the factual details of the

Jewish concentration camp or the travels of Gulliver so that the metaphors making use of such allusions may be understood, but the emotional response of somebody who has grown up with the experience is apt to be lost. Insufficient knowledge of the source culture may cause a myth to be wrongly identified, as Zhuang Yan does with Lady Lazarus or simply missed, as that of the Virgin Mary by all four translators of 'Fever 103°'. Even if a myth is pointed out and the outline of the story told by the translator as Zheng Min does of Clytemnestra in 'Purdah', the metaphorical complex is not necessarily conveyed to the target audience since the system of implications vary in accordance with cultural norms and personal dispositions. The impact of the translation, on which success or failure depends, is largely out of the control of the translator.

The crux of the matter is that cultural coherence, normally present in the formulation of metaphorical concepts, may be at stake in the interlingual transfer. Conventional metaphors straddle more common ground across cultures, and we have seen that they meet with very little obstacle in translating. Innovative metaphors that conflict with traditional Chinese ethics may prove *but at the same time they may also be highly attractive to contemporary readers* problematic! The Confucian code of propriety stipulates that one should act according to one's place in the family and in society. The father and husband each has his distinct status in the social hierarchy and requires the daughter and wife to play a distinct relational role. Both men command great respect; the father in



particular occupies a most distinguished place in patriarchal society. It is unthinkable to see one's object of love as husband-father in one, and definitely monstrous to think of one's father as devil/torturer/vampire. The virtue of 'shu' 恕 or forbearance is advocated by Confucius. To harbour thoughts of 'revenge' and such violent emotions of hatred and murder of one's father would be thought of as being unfilial, unnatural, and even evil. It is perhaps not without reason that Zhuang Yan renders Plath's 'Daddy' into 'Daddy Longlegs'. This is not to argue that violence is tolerated in Western culture and that forbearance is not a Christian virtue. I have attempted to point out the ethical and relational dimensions peculiar to <sup>traditiona</sup>Chinese society that may affect the horizon of expectation of the translation's receptors. Moreover the open expression of violent emotions stands out in horrific proportions in a culture that emphasizes restraint. Modesty, gentleness, and submissiveness are <sup>traditionally</sup> traits <sup>traditiona</sup>expected of the female sex. This coupled with the low place of woman in traditional society would make the concept of liberation and resurrection by throwing off male dominance abominable and unacceptable. A commonly used Chinese idiom crystallizes the sense of usurpation with regard to women's dominance: 'pin ji si chen' 牝雞司晨 (a hen trying to cry cock-a-doodle-doo, the wife as head of the family, extended to the rule of women in wider contexts). Whereas Queen Victoria is glorified in English history, the Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705), the

only female ruler who succeeded to ascend to the throne in her own right, has persistently been debased by *although her achievements have been vindicated by Chinese writers in this century* traditional Chinese scholars/. Hence there is a possibility that when Plath refers to God's lioness (or the Queen Bee in her Bee poems), those readers of the Chinese translation, *who are* steeped in tradition, may not necessarily call up the associations of majesty, prowess, and righteousness as his Western counterpart, to build up the metaphorical complex.

Cultural coherence entails literary coherence as well, namely, the translation's compatibility with the poetic convention in the target language, which will affect its reception in the target literary polysystem. All the Chinese translations of the Plath poems are written in colloquial language in modern verse, a genre that saw its birth in the New Literary Movement in 1917. Compared to classical poetry with its very strict formal requirements and stereotyped conventions, this new verse has been very receptive, and is still open, to Western influence both in form and style. And as the Plath poems dealt with are mostly free verse there has been little constraint imposed by verse form, except that of her early poetry, on the translating process. The more skilful translator will strive to keep to the rhythm of the poem in order to bring out the significance of the image, as for instance, Zhang Fenling's rendering of 'I have been flickering, off, on, off, on' into 'wo dou shanshuo bu ding, an, ming, an, ming', retaining effectively the monosyllables in the second half of the



line. Formal features as such have not hindered translators from retaining the metaphor. However, it would be more difficult for the translator to ensure that literary echoes as those present in 'Lady Lazarus' be not lost to readers belonging to a different literary heritage.

The problem of intertextuality aside, it is the content of the novel metaphors that is alien to the Chinese poetic tradition. Zhu Guangqian 朱光潛, comparing Chinese and Western poetry as early as the 1930s, put forward the idea that love poetry is not as important in Chinese literature as in the West, and that there were more poems written on friendship than on love, because the emotion of love has not been given a privileged position and has not overshadowed other human relations such as those between friends and between the ruler and the subject. Zhu asserts that the model of love between the East and the West is quite different: whereas the West emphasize the freedom to love, the Chinese think highly of marriage but lightly of love, so that the majority of love poetry is written after marriage, the best of its kind being poetry on parting and on the deceased spouse.<sup>1</sup> The same ideas are reiterated by Di Zhaojun 狄兆俊, in *A Comparative Study of Chinese and*

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1 See his essay 'Zhongxi shi zai qingqu shang de bijiao' 中西詩在情趣上的比較 in *Shenbao yuekan* 申報月刊, 3, no.1 (January 1934), reprinted in *Zhongguo bijiao wenxue* 中國比較文學, no.1 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang wenyi chubanshe, 1984), pp.37-48, 275 (pp.38-39).

English Poetics, that Chinese <sup>male</sup> poets like to concentrate on Nature and on friendship but are reluctant to write on love, except to one's deceased wife, which genre has greatly flourished.<sup>2</sup> This can easily be explained by the fact that love which has developed after an arranged marriage and not before is an emotion well-contained within the Confucian code of ethics. The Chinese literary system is intimately linked with the ethical and moral systems, the former entrusted with the responsibility to harmonize human relations.<sup>3</sup> The well-known saying 'wenrou dunhou, shijiao ye' 溫柔敦厚，詩教也。 (poetry teaches one to be gentle, sincere, and generous) sets down the accepted role of poetry. Thus it is to be expected that Plath's novel metaphors of love with their subversive liberating force and violent emotions are basically at variance with traditional Chinese poetics<sup>though exhilarating to contemporary Chinese readers</sup>.

Textual coherence is in the main dependent on cultural coherence, for a coherent interpretation of a

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2 Di Zhaojun, *Zhongying bijiao shixue* 中英比較詩學 (Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1992), pp.294-296. Zhou Bonai 周伯乃, in a lengthy essay surveying the treatment of love in classical Chinese literature, comes to a similar conclusion: 'The love treated in our literature is mostly on the variety of love after marriage or engagement, with emphasis given especially to the relationship after marriage'. See 'Zhongguo gudian wenxue zhong de qing'aiguan' 中國古典文學中的情愛觀 in his *Qing'ai yu wenxue* 情愛與文學 (Taipei: Tongda tushu gongsi, 1984), pp.1-36 (p.36).

3 See Huang Yaomian 黃藥眠 and Tong Qingbing 童慶炳 (eds), *Zhongxi bijiao shixue tixi* 中西比較詩學體系 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1991), pp.13-28.



text is only possible for the target language readers if it is relatable to relevant worlds of which they can make sense. As the poetic metaphor does not occur in isolation but is embedded in a poetic text, the constraints affecting the transmission of a literary text in the act of communication, such as textual coherence and cohesion, collocational and contextual fitness, the combination of sound and meaning, *influence* the process of translating. Textual coherence of the unity metaphor, reinforced by linguistic cohesive devices, which develops throughout the poem 'Event' in a series of images -- 'rift'-'fault'-'ring', supplemented by 'touch', 'dismember', and 'cripple' -- challenges the resourcefulness of the translator. Zhang Fenling's solution in resorting to a literal statement in one instance and substitution in another in dealing with the metaphor 'touch' opts for textual cohesion at the expense of metaphorical coherence. The ring metaphorical complex poses insurmountable difficulty because of the poet's clever use of polysemy in 'Event', private and proverbial associations in 'The Couriers', and a further exploitation of punning in 'Winter Trees', integrating yet more references into the elaborate network of relations. Zhang Fenling, in turning the ring metaphor in 'Event' into a literal statement, gains in cohesive explicitness but loses the richness of meaning. Zheng Min attempts to incorporate both metaphorical levels by presenting the complete scenario, but by making explicit what is implicit, she strips the metaphors of their power

to surprise. Contextual considerations also impose restriction on Zheng Min's treatment of metaphors in the opening lines of 'Winter Trees'.

A combination of linguistic devices and innovative metaphorical concepts have made some of Plath's metaphorical complexes very difficult to be 'properly' understood -- that is, 'from its intention and time' as the author explicitly or implicitly supposed her contemporary audience to know.<sup>4</sup> Notable examples are the metaphorical complexes inherent in the concluding stanzas of 'Lady Lazarus' and 'Purdah'. In the former poem the LOVE IS FIRE metaphor, via LOVE IS PURIFICATION, evolves into LOVE/DEATH IS RESURRECTION. Making use of myths, and drawing on literary allusions and lexical associations, the metaphorical complex assembles into itself too many dimensions to be adequately approximated in the target culture with different mythical implications, literary heritage, and lexical sets. In the latter poem, the possibly varying implications of the Clytemnestra myth and the linguistic associations of the 'lioness' render the impact of the translation indeterminate. To add to the above factors, the metaphors have to be understood in the context of the Plathian mythology, using her entire work as a frame of reference. Taking these into

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4 Jauss discusses the reconstruction of the horizon of expectations from the literary work's reception by its contemporary audience, in *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, p.28.



consideration, the feminist twist in interpretation of the above metaphors may appear obvious to a knowledgeable reader but negligible to the uninitiated.

Having discussed the various dimensions in translating Plath's metaphors of love, we find the most challenging aspect to be her innovative metaphorical concepts. Her use of metaphor fits Lakoff and Turner's description of the stance taken by avant-garde poets: 'The third stance is to attempt to step outside the ordinary ways we think metaphorically and either to offer new modes of metaphorical thought or to make the use of our conventional basic metaphors less automatic by employing them in unusual ways, or otherwise to destabilize them and thus reveal their inadequacies for making sense of reality'.<sup>5</sup> The most thorny problem<sup>for some translators</sup> appears to be that Plath's innovative metaphorical concepts conflict with traditional Chinese cultural values. However I must hasten to add here that a cultural tradition is not static but is constantly open to change. Such is the case with the status of the family and the literary convention in modern and contemporary China. Loyalty to the state has been enforced over commitment to one's family since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The puritanical ideology of the Communist regime and the stress on political and socialist obligations<sup>during the Cultural Revolution</sup> had virtually banished the subject of romantic love from the realm of

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5 *More Than Cool Reason*, pp.51-52.

literature. The

following years

saw the publication of a number of literary works on the theme of love, especially by women writers, exploring its many facets and re-evaluating its role in the individual's life and society.<sup>6</sup> In this connection anti-traditional themes have been treated in contemporary literature which in time will form part of the literary tradition. No less is this true in Taiwan where for instance, a controversial novelette entitled 'sha fu' 殺夫 (Murdering one's husband) was published by the woman novelist Li Ang 李昂 in the early 1980s.<sup>7</sup> The story portrays an oppressed peasant woman, a victim of patriarchal society and a battered wife, who kills her butcher husband in the same way he slaughters a pig when she could no longer stand his sexual abuse and other forms of ill-treatment. In the preface to the novel, the author admits that she had approached the writing of her

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6 The short stories 'The right to love' by Zhang Kangkang 張抗抗, 'Love cannot be forgotten' by Zhang Jie 張潔, and 'On the same horizon' by Zhang Xinxin 張辛欣 are some of the well-known examples. See *Mao's Harvest: Voices from China's New Generation*, edited by Helen F. Siu and Zelda Stern (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) and the Introduction to *Zhongguo nüxing xiaoshuo xuan* 中國女性小說選, edited by Li Ziyun 李子雲 (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1991).

7 An English translation of the novel by Howard Goldblatt and Ellen Yeung was published under the title of *The Butcher's Wife* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1986). The original work, published in Taiwan in 1983, won the first prize in the annual *United Daily News* contest for fiction.



work 'with a number of feminist ideals, wanting to show the tragic fate that awaited the economically dependent Taiwanese women living under the rules of traditional Chinese society'.<sup>8</sup> Standing against stories like this, the Clytemnestra myth would not present such a formidable hurdle to the translator.

When the cultural values embodied in the metaphor conflict with those of the target culture, more likely than not the metaphor will be misinterpreted by the translator and the readers of the translation. However it does not follow that it is impossible to translate such metaphors or for that matter for the translation to be fully understood as long as the target language readers are willing to modify their belief system and readjust their cultural values. As discussed by Huang Shuanfan (Huang Xuanfan) 黃宣範 in his paper 'Meaning, Belief and Translation', every belief is subject to revision and a belief is given up on the strength of new evidence.<sup>9</sup> This is also true with literary convention. Viewing translation as a rewriting of an original text, Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, in their preface to the Translation Studies series which they jointly edit, assert the positive function of translation in introducing new concepts, new genres, and

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8 From Goldblatt and Yeung's translation of 'Author's Preface'.

9 Huang Shuanfan, 'Meaning, Belief and Translation', paper presented at the 'Conference on Translation Today', held in Hong Kong, December 17-21, 1987.

new devices into the target literary system.<sup>10</sup> What takes place when the source and the target systems come into contact in translating is explained in the words of Lefevere as follows: 'those who feel unhappy with the ideology and/or the poetics of their own system will plan to use (rewrite) elements taken from the other system to further their own ends'.<sup>11</sup> This applies to the translator (rewriter) as well as to the target reader, who select new elements to restructure reality in accordance with their own needs. In so doing the translator and reader gain a new perspective, or in Jauss's terminology, bring about a 'change of horizons'. It is in this way that Plath's innovative metaphors, if successfully transmitted, will contribute towards enriching the target system.

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<sup>10</sup> See Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, eds, *Translation, History and Culture* (London: Printer Publishers, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> André Lefevere, 'Systems Thinking and Cultural Relativism', *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature* 26-27 (1988-89), 55-68 (p.64).



## THEORETICAL CONCLUSION

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## Toward a theory of translating poetic metaphor

Having engaged ourselves in detailed analysis of selected examples in the translating of metaphor, we are <sup>ready</sup> now to view the issue from a theoretical perspective. We shall attempt to see: first, what relevance the specific problems identified in the two case studies may have in the overall framework, and second, whether the insight gleaned from the study may contribute towards constructing, if only some aspects of, a general theory. To do so, a brief review of the ongoing discussion on the subject is in order.

## 7.1 Current views on translating metaphor

In contrast to the voluminous literature on metaphor in all related fields and disciplines, the translating of metaphor has been largely neglected by translation theorists.<sup>1</sup> **Menachem Dagut's** article entitled 'Can

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1 J.P. van Noppen's two bibliographies testify to the proliferation of writings resulting from the explosion of interest following the widespread recognition that metaphor is fundamental to human thought and language. Van Noppen's first book, in collaboration with S. de Knop and R. Jongen, *Metaphor: A Bibliography of post-1970 Publications* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1985) has very few items directly dealing with the translating of metaphor. His second book, a joint effort with Jean-Pierre and Edith Hols, *Metaphor II: A Classified Bibliography of Publications 1985 to 1990* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1990), which attempts to see metaphor from the points of view of psychology, psychiatry, philosophy, linguistics, literary criticism, sociology, economics, anthropology, biology and medicine, lists only seven entries under the discipline of 'Translation'.



"metaphor" be translated?' appearing in *Babel* in 1976 was a timely call for attention, which initiated a welcome discussion of the subject. Dagut approached the translating of metaphor from a linguist's point of view, placing the theory of translation within the discipline of contrastive linguistics. Using Aristotle's classic definition of metaphor as a starting point, Dagut sets out to redefine metaphor. Taking it to be a specific and highly distinctive category of semantic change, he delimits the exact scope applicable to the term as follows: 'Every "metaphor" in the proper, narrow sense, is an individual flash of imaginative insight,... which transcends the existing semantic limits of the language and thereby enlarges the hearers' or readers' emotional and intellectual awareness'.<sup>2</sup> Therefore to him, every metaphor is by definition 'original' and 'live' and belongs to the realm of 'performance'. They should be differentiated from metaphorical derivatives which, having lost their uniqueness and become part of the established semantic stock of the language, shifted to 'competence'. Metaphorical derivatives can be classified into 'simplex' (consisting of a single lexical item), forming polysemes (e.g. a warm welcome), and 'complex' (consisting of more than one lexical item), forming idioms (e.g. *flog a dead horse*). In their final stage of development, polysemes and idioms may form formators (e.g. *in view of*).

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2 M. B. Dagut, 'Can "Metaphor" Be Translated?', *Babel*, 22, no.1 (1976), 21-33 (22).

Dagut's definition and classification of metaphor and its derivatives have implications on his theorizing of the translatability of metaphor. Dagut feels that since the translating of metaphorical derivatives has to do with two systems of language competence, it is dependent on the bilingual competence of the translator to 'find' TL equivalences, and is therefore an area of translation that can be fully 'mapped' by translation theory through a contrastive analysis. Metaphor, on the other hand, being a new piece of performance, can have no existing TL equivalence. Thus its translation has to be 'created'. He takes to task two previous views on the translating of metaphor, which he labels the 'no solution' and 'no problem' views. The former, represented by Nida, Vinay and Darbelnet, holds that metaphor is untranslatable. The latter, propounded by Rolf Kloepper, and followed by Reiss, asserts that metaphors can be simply translated word for word, especially if they are bold and inventive. After analyzing a number of translations of metaphors from Hebrew into English, he fully subscribes to the importance of the 'cultural context' of metaphors undergoing the translating process and calls for close studies of SL-TL renderings of metaphors between as great a variety of languages as possible. He concludes that 'what determines the translatability of a SL metaphor is not its "boldness" or "originality" but rather the extent to which the cultural experience and semantic association on which it draws are shared by speakers of the particular TL' (p.28).



Dagut did pinpoint the right areas on which the translatability of metaphor depends but it seems that general terms like 'cultural experience' and 'semantic association' with such wide implications can hardly do justice to this complex issue. For instance, which parameters of cultural experience are likely to be involved? Is semantic association the only linguistic element implied in the translating process? Can success or failure in translation be explained by the blanket term of 'overlap'? Dagut ~~was~~ apparently dissatisfied with his use of terminology. In an article published eleven years later he modifies his earlier formulation, replacing 'the cultural experiences and semantic associations on which it draws' by 'cultural and lexical matrices in which it is set' as he realizes that the effectiveness of the metaphor hinges on the ability of the translator in reproducing its cultural and lexical resonances in the TL. He proposes that a 'theory' of the translation of metaphor is to consist of two parts: '(1) the establishment of the general principle that, in relation to any TL, every ST metaphor occupies a position on a gradient of translatability (ranging from completely untranslatable to literally translatable) determined by its cultural and lexical resonances and the extent to which these can be reproduced in the TL; and (2) a close investigation of these resonances and the possibility of reproducing them in every particular case'.<sup>3</sup> His preference for 'cultural

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3 Menachem Dagut, 'More About the Translatability of Metaphor', *Babel*, 33, no.2 (1987), 77-83 (82).

and lexical matrices' to 'cultural experience' and 'semantic association' shows that he takes stock of the complex and intricate lexico-cultural relationship in which the metaphor is embedded. His choice of 'resonances' importing a dynamic interaction to replace the more static 'overlap' captures the receptor-oriented nature of the communicative act, although one would still be hard pressed to say what exactly these resonances are.

**Raymond Van Den Broeck's** response to Dagut in the form of a conference paper, presented in 1978 but published in 1981, is the most systematic and theoretically oriented of the ensuing discussions.<sup>4</sup> Arguing against Dagut's objection to 'any single generalization about the translatability of metaphor', which is generally felt to be inadequate, Van Den Broeck proposes to deal with the translating of metaphor at a theoretical constituent level. He takes upon himself the modest task of 'laying bare some of the hidden mechanisms governing the translation of metaphors and their theoretic degree of translatability' (p.73). He uses an operational definition of metaphor as 'transferred meaning' with which to examine categories, uses and functions of metaphor. In accordance with their degree of being 'institutionalized', metaphors

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4 See Raymond Van Den Broeck, 'The Limits of Translatability Exemplified by Metaphor Translation', *Poetics Today*, 2, no. 4 (1981), 73-87. Van Den Broeck's ideas on metaphor discussed in this section are from the above article, for which I shall not give bibliographical details, but just supply page numbers when quotations are made.



are divided into three categories: lexicalized, conventional, and private. In explaining his disagreement with Dagut's exact distinction between metaphor and metaphorical derivatives (polysemes, idioms, and formators, which Van Den Broeck includes under his 'lexicalized' category), he makes the important point that the status of a metaphor is not static but dynamic, so that if there is a shift from 'performance' to 'competence', there may be a shift in reverse from 'competence' to 'performance' through which lexicalized or 'dead' metaphors may become 'alive' again.

For translation theory the use of metaphor should be considered in relation to its functional relevance to the communicative situation and further distinguished between creative metaphor and decorative metaphor. He proposes a scheme of three possible modes of metaphor translation: (1) Translation '*sensu stricto*', when both SL 'tenor' and SL 'vehicle' are transferred into the TL, (2) Substitution, where the SL 'vehicle' is replaced by a different TL 'vehicle', and (3) Paraphrase, when a SL metaphor is rendered by a non-metaphorical expression.

He discusses with insight questions concerning translatability arising from metaphors occurring in texts. He considers the private (or 'poetic') metaphor in relation to the linguistic, socio-cultural, and literary systems as well as to the poet's private symbolic system. Treating metaphor as linguistic deviance, he sees it in terms of breaking of collocation rules, violation of contextual selection restriction and having the power of

realigning conceptual boundaries. He argues that Kloepfer's view that bold and unique metaphors are easier to translate appears to hold true in so far as private metaphor is itself a violation of rules governing linguistic systems, so that differences between SL and TL linguistic systems would not impose serious limitations. However, to think that whenever the SL system is violated, the TL system may similarly be violated would oversimplify the matter. Translatability of metaphor depends on a number of factors existing in the SL and TL, for example, morphological and grammatical characteristics, cultural context, and semantic associations. Other constraints such as clashes with aesthetic convention and tradition and differences in moral values will impede the translating of a bold metaphor. The conventional metaphor, in spite of the fact of its being culture-bound, is capable of adequate translation, the main problem involved being the choice of an appropriate translation mode. To him, the lexicalized metaphor, in as much as it is institutionalized and belonging to the particular linguistic and cultural systems, forms the main challenge to the translator. He *challenges* Dagut's assumption that translation of lexicalized metaphors is an area of translation that can be fully mapped by translation theory, as he feels that the treatment of lexicalized metaphors will entirely depend on their functional relevancy to the communicative situation.

In attempting to formulate basic principles of the translatability of metaphor he makes it clear that the



translatability of metaphor is a special case or significant aspect of translatability in general and is governed by the laws for general translatability. Guided by such parameters he proposes a basic law of the translatability of metaphor: 'translatability keeps an inverse proportion with the quantity of information manifested by the metaphor and the degree to which this information is structured in a text'(p.84). Further specifications of the basic law, worked out by Van Den Broeck, are summarized as follows: (1) Lexical metaphors in referential texts (where their 'vehicles' as such have no functional relevance), as they represent a single kind of information, are of a high translatability; (2) Foregrounded lexical metaphors in complex texts (poems, puns) are of a very low translatability, since they convey contextual, poetic, and metalingual information simultaneously; (3) Bold private metaphors in literary texts will be more translatable than conventional metaphors to the degree that they are less culture-bound and are thus able to dispense with culture-specific information; and (4) 'Decorative' metaphors (as e.g., in journalistic prose), to the degree that they are less relevant for the communicative function of the text, may be substituted or paraphrased. This basic law indeed takes care of the translatability of metaphor in accordance with the function, type, structure of metaphor in text as well as text types. The only point I would dispute with is the use of the term 'quantity', as it appears to me it is the 'kind' rather than the quantity of

information that is at stake. For instance lexical metaphors in referential texts that are of a high translatability listed under (1) may carry a large quantity of information, albeit it a single kind of information.

Moving from Van Den Broeck's tightly structured theoretical treatment of the translating of metaphor in its full complexity to **Peter Newmark's** more pragmatic approach, we have a complete change of scene. Newmark's discussion of the subject appeared as a short article in *Babel* in 1980, later expanded to form a chapter of his *Approaches to Translation* (1981), and further revised when collected in *The Ubiquity of Metaphor: Metaphor in Language and Thought* (1985).<sup>5</sup> The definition of metaphor, not given in the aforesaid discussions, was formulated in his *A Textbook of Translation*, published in 1988 as 'any figurative expression: the transferred sense of a physical word; the personification of an abstraction; the application of a word or collocation to what it does not literally denote, i.e., to describe one thing in terms of another'.<sup>6</sup> This rather loose statement, probably intended

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5 See Peter Newmark, 'The Translation of Metaphor', *Babel*, 26, no.2 (1980), 93-100; *Approaches to Translation* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981), pp.84-96; 'The Translation of Metaphor' in *The Ubiquity of Metaphor: Metaphor in language and Thought*, edited by Wolf Paprotte and René Dirven (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1985), pp.295-326.

6 A slightly modified account appears as Chapter 10: 'The Translation of Metaphors' in *A Textbook of Translation* (London: Prentice Hall, 1988), pp.104-113 (p. 104).



to embrace the various forms which the metaphor may possibly take, could not capture the essence of the metaphor as the introductory remark of the chapter in his 1981 book succeeded in doing. In his *Approaches to Translation* he accurately points out that the one serious purpose of metaphor is to describe something more comprehensively and concisely and in a more complex way than is possible by using literal language and that the process is initially emotive, often dramatic and shocking, with the aim of providing insight.

Metaphors, which may be 'single' (one word) or 'extended' (a collocation, an idiom, a sentence, a proverb, an allegory, a complete imaginative text) are further divided into six types: dead, cliché, stock, adapted, recent, and original (the type 'adapted' being added in 1988). Cutting across this categorization are two others of a different kind, which may be at any place on the scale between 'dead' and 'live'. One kind is the conceptual metaphor in the Lakoff and Johnson sense, which Newmark recognizes to be basic and universal. The second is the affective metaphor, which indicates states of mind, whether individual or collective. Contrary to Dagut's belief that the translation of metaphorical derivatives is an area that can be fully mapped by translation theory, Newmark thinks that 'dead metaphors are no part of translation theory, which is concerned with choices and decisions', but 'a dead metaphor brought to life immediately becomes a translation-theory problem' (*Approaches to Translation*, p.86). He agrees with Kloepper

in principle that the image of an original metaphor should normally be transferred, as it is likely to have fewer local cultural associations than metaphorical derivatives, and is more easily transferable.

Drawing on practical experience, Newmark proposes eight procedures for translating metaphor in order of preference: (1) Reproducing the same image in the TL, (2) Replacing the image in the SL with a standard TL image, (3) Translation of metaphor by simile, (4) Translation of metaphor (or simile) by simile plus sense, (5) Conversion of metaphor to sense, (6) Modification of metaphor, (7) Deletion, and (8) Reproducing same metaphor combined with sense (*The Ubiquity of Metaphor: Metaphor in Language and Thought*, pp.304-311). The above methods, envisaged as guidelines for the practising translator, virtually cover all the ways of handling the metaphor.

Opposing the views of the previous three scholars who recognize the centrality of the translation of metaphor in the theory of translation, **Kirsten Mason** in her 1982 article in *Babel*, pronounces it is futile to establish a theory of the translation of metaphor after demonstrating that the problems with metaphor and the problems with translation are separate and distinct. To her the translation of metaphor has to be accommodated within a theory of translation which has to allow room for the notion of the purpose of translating each new text.<sup>7</sup>

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7 Kirsten Mason, 'Metaphor and Translation', *Babel*, 28, no.3 (1982), 140-49.



Not discouraged by Mason's misgivings, scholars continue to be fascinated by theoretical problems concerning the translating of metaphor. **Mary Snell-Hornby's** 1983 paper entitled 'Metaphorical Thought and Translation: Taking a stand on P. Newmark' was conceived as a reaction to Newmark's initial formulation on the translation of metaphor.<sup>8</sup> The challenge of metaphor, she feels, is not only limited to the original metaphors of literary language emerging from Newmark's examples, but comes also from the pervading everyday metaphors. Quoting Lakoff and Johnson's definition of metaphor, she recognizes that the insight to translation is that such conceptual overlapping is not always directly transferable from one language to another and in cases where the structure of the metaphors may have to be changed, such changes are determined firstly by the function and structure of the metaphor and secondly by its relevance to the text.

Her views on the issue have crystallized into a succinct account forming a section of a chapter of her book *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*, published in 1988. Of interest is her conviction that 'metaphor is text', rejecting Newmark's concept of the 'one-word metaphor' in favour of an integrated approach, in particular as regards the phenomenon of dimension and

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8 Mary Snell-Hornby, 'Metaphorical Thought and Translation: Taking a stand on P. Newmark', reproduced by L.A.U.T. (Linguistic Agency University of Trier), July 1983, series A, Paper no.108, pp.1-12.

perspective. A 'one-word metaphor' can be shown to be a complex of three dimensions consisting of object, image, and sense, using Newmark's terminology. Following up her 1983 paper's emphasis of the conceptual nature of metaphors, she draws attention to cultural differences: 'The essential problem posed by metaphor in translation is that different cultures, hence different languages, conceptualize and create symbols in varying ways, and therefore the sense of the metaphor is frequently culture-specific'.<sup>9</sup> She does not subscribe to watertight categories of metaphors such as dead, stock, etc., but believes that the position of a metaphor shifts with cultural developments. Endorsing Dagut's final conclusions and his rejection of Kloepfer's 'no problem' approach, she takes her position that metaphor is more or less translatable depending on its structure and function within the text. Illustrating her observations with the translation of three examples, she reiterates her view expressed earlier: 'As an abstract concept, metaphor might be universal (as claimed in Newmark 1981); in its concrete realization however, being closely linked with sensuous perception and culture-bound value judgments, it is undoubtedly complicated by language-specific idiosyncracies' (*Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*, p.63).

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9 Mary Snell-Hornby, *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1988, p.57).



Mary Snell-Hornby's views on the translating of metaphor remain essentially the same now as those expressed earlier. Her lecture on 'The unfamiliar image: Metaphor as a problem in translation' delivered in December 1992 in Hong Kong, amplifies different aspects of the above ideas.<sup>10</sup> Reviewing Dagut's discussion of Kloepfer's argument, she makes the following salient points:

- (1) Metaphor is essentially a cultural phenomenon and not primarily a concern of the language system.
- (2) The dichotomy of 'translatable' vs. 'untranslatable' can be resolved into a cline of relativity.
- (3) The translation of metaphor can be governed either by abstract rules or by decisions based on the individual text.
- (4) A clear distinction is made, not only between informative and expressive texts, but also between original metaphors, particularly 'bold' ones and lexicalized metaphors. (p.5)

The substance of her lecture consists of demonstrating the validity of these points on the basis of two examples. The first one concerns the translation, or rather the omission, of the phrase 'cloak and dagger' in a Chinese report on the *Newsweek* article in which the phrase appeared. Tracing the process of lexicalization of 'cloak

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10 Mary Snell-Hornby's lecture, delivered as a Wei Lun Visiting Professor, in the Chinese University of Hong Kong, on December 11, 1992, appears to be substantially the same as her paper of the same title published in *Anglistentag 1987. Tübingen. Vorträge*, edited by H.W. Ludwig (Giessen: Hoffmann). My quotations from the lecture are from her manuscript, by kind permission of the author.

and dagger', she shows that its use in the original creates a network of rich cultural associations, whereas its literal transfer into Chinese, being an unfamiliar image, would not evoke such associations. Her second example involves the translation into German of bold, original metaphors in a passage from an English novel. With these intricate metaphorical complexes focusing on perception, the difficulty lies in coordinating the impact created by various apparently conflicting semantic and associative elements. Her observations may be summarized as follows: firstly, the lexicalization of a metaphor may aggravate rather than simplify the problems of translating it. Secondly, an original metaphor tends to highlight the image, whereas a lexicalized metaphor tends to focus on object and sense. Thirdly, where the information function of a text is dominant, the image tends to be sacrificed in favour of object and sense. In a literary text where the interplay of components within the metaphor is an artistic device essential to the message, the translator should be permitted to be creative.

Apart from persistent efforts in theoretical formulation of the translating of metaphor, mention could also be made of isolated essays contributing towards this end. **Fred Van Besien and Katja Pelsmaekers's** joint paper, 'The Translation of Metaphor' (1988), focuses on the function of metaphor, which they consider to be neglected in the discussion of translation theory. The greater part of the article is taken up by a brief review of the approaches to metaphor and current discussions on



the translation of metaphor. They make the point that since metaphor is not necessarily expressing a resemblance, the privileged status enjoyed by the use of the simile in the translation of metaphor is undeserved. The authors' own contribution lies mainly in their analysis of the function of metaphor in literary and scientific texts. Although the function of metaphor beyond pure embellishment has been acknowledged for literary texts, this aspect of metaphor in other kinds of texts, such as scientific texts, they feel, is largely unrecognized. The function of metaphor in different texts could make a considerable difference in terms of translation strategies. Therefore they 'point to the various functions of metaphors in texts as a focus for the translation theorist proper'.<sup>11</sup>

The literature on translating metaphor discussed so far was in the form of papers or individual chapters of published works. **Alicja Pisarska** produced a full-length book entitled *Creativity of Translators: The Translation of Metaphorical Expressions in Non-literary Texts* in 1989.<sup>12</sup> After reviewing some of the literature on translation theory, metaphor, and text types, she gives a critical account of current approaches to the translating

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11 Fred Van Besien and Katja Pelsmaekers, 'The Translation of Metaphor', in *Translation, Our Future*, Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of FIT, edited by Paul Nekeman (Maastricht: Euroterm, 1988), pp.140-46 (p.145).

12 Alicja Pisarska, *Creativity of Translators: The Translation of Metaphorical Expressions in Non-literary Texts* (Poznan: Adam Mickiewicz University Press, 1989).

of metaphor. Applying Van Den Broeck and Newmark's procedures to a corpus of 120 metaphors in non-literary English texts and their Polish translations, she tested the adequacy of the two schemes. In her analysis of the distribution of the metaphors in relation to the procedures used for translating, she found that 72 metaphors were translated by reproducing the same image, 22 by replacing the SL image by a standard TL image, 19 were converted to sense, and the remaining 7, distributed among four other described procedures. She comes up with the finding, not quite unexpectedly, that the translatability of metaphors in the above instances is high, the creativity demanded of translators low, and there are minimal problems involved, as the metaphors examined are chiefly ornamental.

Taking the point that the function of a metaphor is directly related to the kind of text in which it appears, she proposes a four way division of metaphors between conceptual and ornamental on the one hand and new and used on the other, believing that such a classification could capture all metaphors appearing in all kinds of texts. Her conceptual metaphors are not used in the Lakoff and Johnson sense as metaphorical concepts which structure our experience but rather in Dagut's sense of true metaphors. Their characteristic appearance in literary texts in which they combine aesthetic, artistic, symbolic, and cognitive values determines the intellectual power and artistry of the work. They are original creations, the kind that dominates poetry. Ornamental metaphors on the other hand



simply decorate or enliven texts and may be replaced by non-metaphorical expressions or other metaphorical expressions without great loss. Newmark, while commending Pisarska's book in one of his 'Paragraphs on Translation' written in January 1991, disagrees with her on this point: 'I think she is mistaken in thinking that "ornamental" metaphors (take "wooden face") merely serve to enliven a dull text; all metaphors, even cliché metaphors, attempt to "mean" real or imagined actions, processes, objects, qualities, etc., more comprehensively, succinctly, arrestingly, even decoratively or ornamentally than is possible in literal language'.<sup>13</sup> As to the distinction between new and used metaphors Pisarska feels that the line is very difficult to draw and has to be largely intuitive. The original creation and the lexicalized metaphor represent the extreme points on an imaginary scale. She feels that the division is not a central issue in translating, because in creating metaphors, one has to draw on cultural heritage, literary and metaphorical tradition, rarely creating absolutely new ones.

Although the main subject of her investigation is the ornamental metaphor, she explores the complex phenomenon of the conceptual metaphor, in which she identifies the real problem of creating a theory for the translating of metaphor. In the conclusion of her monograph, she calls

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13 Peter Newmark's *Paragraphs on Translation* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1993) is a collection of his contributions of the same title to *The Linguist* from May 1989 to August 1992. The quotation is on p.72.

attention to the need for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of metaphor, as not only the linguistic, but the conceptual, cognitive, and aesthetic aspects of metaphor have to be given due recognition.

To sum up, the above discussions on the translation of metaphor triggered off by Dagut's stimulating paper centre on the definition and classification<sup>of metaphor</sup> approaches to translating and its translatability. Their views may be conflicting, but with the exception of Mason, all agree that the translating of metaphor is central to the theory of translation and should be re-evaluated. Dagut's attempt to delimit the area of inquiry into 'true metaphor', although insightful, is felt by all to be too narrow in our everyday application to encompass this pervading and dynamic phenomenon. The point raised by Van Den Broeck that there is a two-way shift between 'performance' and 'competence' drives home the nature of the status of a metaphor.

The classification of metaphor is an area where most disagree. Dagut's definition exempts him from the need of making any categorization. Neither Van Den Broeck's three-fold classification nor Newmark's six types are acceptable to all. Very often a metaphor belonging to a certain category of one theorist will be assigned to a different category by another theorist. Pisarska while proposing a four way classification, taking into consideration function and text types, expresses her doubts as to the evidence available for demarcation, which she feels to be largely a matter of intuition. Mary Snell-Hornby rejects



altogether a typology of watertight categories; rather the position of a metaphor on the scale from 'original' to 'dead' changes with cultural developments.

*In keeping with* their own theoretical positions the above scholars take different stands on the translation issues discussed. Dagut's statement that metaphorical derivatives constitute an area of translation that can be fully mapped by translation theory is *challenged* by Van Den Broeck, who stresses the functional relevancy of these linguistic items to the communicative situation, on which success or failure of translation depends. Newmark also disagrees with Dagut, but for a different reason. Taking translation theory to be concerned with choices and decisions, Newmark considers dead metaphors outside the concerns of translation theory unless they are resurrected. As to the 'no solution' and the 'no problem' approaches discussed, nobody responded to the former approach, probably because all those who take the trouble to study the theoretical problem of translating metaphor seriously share the basic assumption that some solution has to be and can be found to the intriguing problem. Newmark, who is all for retaining the SL image as far as possible, endorses Kloepfer's proposal that the image of a bold metaphor should normally be transferred. Van Den Broeck agrees, but with reservation, to Kloepfer's idea that a bold metaphor is easier to translate, calling attention to a number of constraints on the translating process.

In exploring the translatability of metaphor, various factors such as the context in which a metaphor occurs,

its communicative function, structure, and text types have been considered. Van Den Broeck proposes three modes and Newmark eight procedures for translating metaphors respectively, but the approach has to be descriptive, for one can never prescribe which method of translation to adopt. The constraints on translating vary immensely in each communicative situation, and the translator has to make his own decision in accordance with the relevant factors in each particular case. The general consensus appears to be that metaphors are neither easily translatable nor completely untranslatable. Each metaphor occupies a position on 'a gradient of translatability' or 'a cline of relativity' depending on its structure and function.

The approach to metaphor ranges from a strictly linguistic point of view in the earlier studies to a wider cognitive and interdisciplinary perspective. Even though Dagut and Van Den Broeck started to view metaphor as linguistic deviance, Dagut emphasizes the importance of cultural context and Van Den Broeck takes into consideration the socio-cultural and literary systems as soon as they focus on the process of translating metaphor. Snell-Hornby's *emphasis is on metaphor as* an essentially cultural phenomenon and not primarily a concern of the language system. Pisarska, in looking to future research in the translating of metaphor, draws attention to the need for an interdisciplinary approach.



## 7.2 Implications of the translating of poetic metaphor

The preceding discussions on translating metaphor in general all touch on or even emphasize translating poetic metaphor in the sense of original metaphor occurring in creative writing or literary texts not restricted to poetry alone. Dagut's true metaphor, being 'an individual flash of imaginative insight', with the power of enlarging 'the hearers' or readers' emotional and intellectual awareness', captures the essence of the original or poetic metaphor. His examples of translation from Hebrew into English, from which his formulation of the principles on the translatability of metaphor is derived, are all drawn from literary texts. His choice of the poetic metaphor for study is not surprising as he *claims* that the metaphor is central to all forms of language use, especially to creative writing. Van Den Broeck's private metaphors, 'the so-called bold, innovating creations of individual poets', are called alternatively 'poetic' metaphors by him. We have already summarized his insightful discussion of the various constraints on translating poetic metaphors occurring in texts. Likewise Snell-Hornby, in all her discussions, includes original metaphors from a literary text, which play a part in formulating her theory on the translatability of metaphor. Finally, in spite of the fact that, strictly speaking, the poetic metaphor lies outside the area of her investigation, Pisarska recognizes its

importance and puts forward the notion of creating a theory for the translation of conceptual metaphor, taking into consideration its numerous aspects and values, as a means of resolving the various issues in translating. Thus it can be seen that the poetic metaphor features significantly in the theory on translating metaphor in general discussed in the above section.

A common point that emerges from the previous discussions is that the poetic metaphor (unlike the ornamental metaphor in a non-literary text) functions in a way essential to the character of the literary work. Van Den Broeck considers the only plausible distinction between creative and non-creative language use is that metaphors in creative texts are functionally relevant, while those in non-creative texts are most likely not.

Newmark on the emotive power of the metaphor and Snell-Hornby, on the element of sensuous perception constituting the metaphoric sense, point to something felt to be irreplaceable in the poetic metaphor. Pisarska affirms that conceptual or poetic metaphors are essential to the texts in which they appear as their presence determines the intellectual power and artistry of the literary work. All theorists agree that poetic metaphors cannot be left untranslated without affecting the basic character of the work, and that in rendering poetic metaphors the translator is allowed to be creative.

In discussing categorization of metaphor and its translation problems, Van Den Broeck brings up the question of the relationship between the poet's private



symbolic system and the widely intelligible symbolism of the past. Since the private and the traditional systems very often overlap in large areas, the categorization of a private metaphor is by no means a straightforward and clear-cut matter nor is its 'uniqueness' indisputable. The private metaphor, even the boldest poetic metaphor, is an item in a paradigm, belonging to the poet's private system. In considering the translatability of the poetic metaphor, one has therefore to take account of the interplay between the poet's private system and the metaphorical convention, as well as the interaction of the poetic metaphor with the linguistic, socio-cultural, and literary systems. To these wider perspectives of intersystemic problems, Mary Snell-Hornby adds the specific one of multi-dimensional intricacies of metaphorical complexes together with the variety of interpretations open to the reader. All of these are challenges to the translating of the poetic metaphor.

Finally we shall deal with an overall approach to the translating of poetic metaphor. Alet Kruger, in an article entitled 'Translating metaphors in narrative fiction' published in 1993, advocates the global rather than the local approach to the translating of poetic metaphor.<sup>14</sup> The terms are adopted from Ina Grabe, who develops and refines the interaction theory of metaphor, by the application of a textual (i.e. global) rather than a

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14 Alet Kruger, 'Translating metaphors in narrative fiction', *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, no.1 (1993), 23-30.

syntactical (i.e. local) analysis of interaction processes in poetic metaphor. Arguing that textual specificity rather than syntactic incompatibility ultimately determines the interpretation of a metaphorical expression within a poetic text, Grabe proposes that local interpretative procedures be modified and extended and global interaction strategies developed. Following the logic of this argument, any local metaphorical expression may only be textually clarified in a global consideration of its relation to other local metaphorical expressions in the poetic text. In other words, this presupposes reference to the poem as a whole.<sup>15</sup> Kruger applies this framework to her analysis and interpretation of metaphors in a contemporary Afrikaans novel and compares their translations into English by its author. She finds that the metaphors under examination can be grouped together in the semantic paradigm 'farm life' functioning as a characterization technique for the protagonist's character trait as farmer and countrywoman. The translator, by resorting to substitution, paraphrase, or simply omission, fails to sustain the interdependence between character, speech, and environment created by the metaphors in the original. As a result the target text lacks the semantic density of the source text, and the loss of meaning adversely affects the characterization of the novel, and negatively influences the reader's reception of the

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15 Ina Grabe, 'Local and global aspects of interaction processes in poetic metaphor', *Poetics*, 13 (1984), 433-57.



translated novel as a literary work. Kruger has demonstrated through the above example that a global rather than a local approach is necessary in dealing with the interpretation, translation, and evaluation of complex literary metaphors.

No attempt so far has been made to formulate a theory for the translating of the poetic metaphor nor has the subject been separately dealt with in any detail in translation theory. The above theoretical implications are mainly derived from literature on metaphor translation in general. Having established the context for the study of the theory of translating poetic metaphor, the stage is now set for a further examination of the two case studies described in Parts I and II of the dissertation in the light of current theoretical discussions.

### **7.3 Theoretical implications of the two case studies**

Before embarking upon theoretical discussions, I shall first of all point out the limitations imposed by the scope of the case studies and compare their differences in relation to the translation phenomena exposed. Then major theoretical problems central to our approach to metaphor translation will be taken up and a model of the translating of poetic metaphor will be presented. Finally, inferences from the model, drawn initially from our data analysed earlier, will be studied in an attempt to shed some light, if only partially, on a theory of translating poetic metaphor.

### 7.3.1 Specifics and limitations

Following Lakoff's assumption that domains of experience are systematically structured, I have chosen to restrict my investigation to the domains of experience of 'sickness' and 'love', in the hope that metaphors in a single target domain can be usefully and systematically studied. The metaphors of sickness and love of course are defined in relation to other basic domains like 'war' and 'fire', but as can be expected not all basic domains of experience have been involved in our two case studies. The poetic metaphors occurring in this study do not and cannot hope to embrace all areas of human experience, and must in this respect be individual and partial representations. However it is not the goal of this study to arrive at an ultimate formulation of an overall theory for the translating of poetic metaphor. I should be happy to approach the problem from 'a theoretical constituent level' (in the words of Van Den Broeck), and to discover some of the regularities governing this complex phenomenon.

The study of Shakespeare's metaphors of sickness and Plath's metaphors of love has yielded interesting insights into translation problems involved in two major uses of metaphor distinguished by Lakoff and Turner, namely, masterly deployment by combination, extension and crystallization, and innovative deployment to make new sense of reality. The translation corpora from which the samples are drawn in the two case studies are by no means



equal in quality and quantity. Whereas there are six complete *baihua* translations of *Hamlet*, besides adaptations and *wenyan* versions, there is not even a single published volume of Plath's selected poetry in Chinese translation. All the translations of Plath's poems are gleaned from anthologies and translations published in periodicals. This disparity of attention given to the two writers in the target literary system may be due to their degree of familiarity to the Chinese translators. In spite of the fact that both Shakespeare and Plath are widely read in the source literary system, the former, having been canonized for some two hundred years, has long enjoyed great prestige at home and abroad. Compared to Plath, Shakespeare has a longer history of contact with Chinese culture. The first recorded mention of Shakespeare in China appeared in the mid-nineteenth century, and translations of Charles Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* together with rewrites of his plays reached the Chinese audience at the turn of the century. But it was only under the impetus of the May Fourth Literary Movement that the translation of Shakespearean plays in the vernacular began to appear. Incidentally the first important translation of its kind was the translation of *Hamlet* by the playwright Tian Han in 1921.<sup>16</sup> After that, Chinese translations of Shakespeare flourished. Two complete translations of Shakespeare, including plays and poems, have since been

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16 Tian Han's translation of *Hamlet* was first published in *Shaonian Zhongguo* 少年中國 in 1921 and came out in book form in the following year.

published, one undertaken mainly by a translator in the Mainland and the other completed his work in Taiwan. Numerous other versions were published from time to time, while translators of individual plays number over thirty. In the academic world a journal devoted to Shakespearean research is currently published and the Shakespeare Society in China was formed.<sup>17</sup> These have no parallels in the Plathean case. In the first place, documentary evidence and studies are lacking on Sylvia Plath's contact with China. She came to be known in Taiwan in the sixties, the earliest translations of her poems in my collection appearing in 1969. The only prose work known to the Chinese audience in addition to her poems appears to be *The Bell Jar*. With the adoption of a more liberal literary policy in China after the Cultural Revolution, sporadic translations of Plath's poetry have found their way into print since the 1980s. It appears that the literary reputation of Sylvia Plath has not yet been firmly established in the receiving system, but the two 1992 anthologies published in Beijing agree in their emphasis

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17 For Shakespeare's contact with China, see Wang Zuoliang, 'The Shakespearean Moment in China' with select bibliography, collected in his *A Sense of Beginning: Studies in Literature and Translation* (Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1991), pp.19-41; Lu Gusun, 'Hamlet Across Space and Time', *Shakespeare Survey*, no.36 (1983), 53-56; Tsao Wei-feng (Cao Weifeng), 'Shakespeare in China', *China Reconstructs* (July 1955), 8-9; C.H. Chang, *Shakespeare in China*, M.A. Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1951.



on the increasing prestige and significance of Plath's poetry, placing her with the Confessional poets.<sup>18</sup>

Of course it does not follow that a less well-known source text would attract less competent translators, or for that matter, would necessarily lead to the production of inadequate translations. But the availability of translations of certain and not all of Plath's poems does have direct bearing on the spread of the examples, and the researcher, in certain instances, is left with no choice but to make use of less satisfactory translations. An analysis of the titles of articles and anthologies shows that the publication of the Plath poems aims at introducing to the Chinese reading public modern American poetry written by a woman Confessional poet with innovative ideas and technique.<sup>19</sup> The choice of the poems, besides being determined by the prime factor of translatability, does give support to the above emphasis. Except for a few idiosyncratic selections of individual translators, the corpus of translations includes many of Plath's important poems, with a bias towards confessional and feminist poems. Not unexpectedly, 'Lady Lazarus' tops the list with eight translations and 'Morning Song', a

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18 See the introduction to Plath's poems in *Shijie mingshi sanbaishou*, edited by Meng Zhaoqing and Zhou Yihu (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1992), p.723 and *Waiguo ershi shiji chunshuqingshi jinghua*, edited by Wang Jiabin and Tang Xiaodu (Beijing: Zuoja chubanshe, 1992), p.70.

19 The titles of the articles and anthologies listed in Appendix II tend to highlight the words importing (1) modern, contemporary, or twentieth century, (2) woman poet, and (3) confessional poetry.

beautiful poem writing of mother-love, comes second with seven translations. As to the 'silence' in between the pages, the poems with violent and uncontrolled passion in straightforward statement (a typical example being the vehement outburst of 'Words heard, by accident, over the phone') are left out. This would agree with the point brought up in chapter six that the Chinese poetic tradition celebrates the virtues of tolerance, gentle forgivingness, and restraint.

Obviously reception of the two writers by the target system is widely different. Shakespeare has been named as a popular writer and bestseller in the Mainland and Taiwan, ranking second to Hans Christian Andersen in a post-1949 survey.<sup>20</sup> Hong Kong is not less receptive to Shakespeare, and indeed boasts greater familiarity, with Shakespeare long established in school curricula and plays in the original and translation often performed and well-received. Again there are no statistics to support the case of Plath. Her isolated appearance in periodicals and anthologies did not attract any marked enthusiastic or negative feedback. It is safe to assume that Plath is still unfamiliar to the Chinese reading public at large and response to her poetry may be varied and immensely indeterminate.

One may conjecture that the specifics at the systemic level may have impact on the translating and reception of

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20 See Wolfgang Bauer, *Western Literature and Translation Work in Communist China* (Hamburg: Institut für Asienkunde, 1964).



the poetic metaphors in the two case studies. That the Shakespearean metaphors were set in the Elizabethan age would, of course, involve problems of comprehension but the time axis is balanced out by their greater familiarity in the target literary system. Plath's poetry and personal metaphors, owing to their unfamiliarity and innovative character, will be open to more varied interpretation and reception depending on the disposition of the translator and the target language reader. This situation is further accentuated by the nature of the two domains under study. The metaphors of sickness, in spite of the fact that they draw on different medical knowledge and traditions, depend more on somatic experience which is more universal and less mediated by culture. The domain of love, on the other hand, according to Lakoff, is more open to alternative conceptualizations, as is characteristic of those domains of experience (such as the emotions) that do not come with a clearly delineated preconceptual structure of their own (*Women, Fire, and Dangerous things*, p.305). The concept of romantic love, being culture-specific, adds to the complexities of translating Plath's innovative metaphors.

### 7.3.2 Universalism or relativism

Mary Snell-Hornby, in the conclusion to her paper 'Metaphorical Thought and Translation', brings up the question of the extent to which metaphor is universal or culture-bound. After remarking that Newmark is interested in the universal base of metaphors whereas Lakoff and

Johnson in their inherent cultural bias, she mentions the Chomsky school in contrast to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. She sums up the position of the two schools as : 'the first view arguing for absolute translatability, the second maintaining that translation is impossible' (p.10). Although Snell-Hornby's own stand is less absolute, recognizing the impact of language-specific idiosyncrasies on the translation of 'metaphor, her above summary of position is over-simplified. That the case of linguistic relativity stands for absolute nontranslatability has been repudiated in 0.1.2 of the Introduction. Here I shall further take up the issue in the light of my findings in the case studies.

Lakoff observes that alternative ways of conceptualization are normal in everyday life even within the same language and culture. There are, as can be expected, differences of conceptualization across cultural systems. Metaphors are to a large extent language and culture specific, but emphasis is laid on a general conceptualizing capacity and basic experience shared by human beings. Lakoff shows that the number of basic conceptual metaphors is relatively small. These basic metaphors can be combined conceptually and expressed in an infinitude of linguistic expressions (*More than Cool Reason*, p.51). Our case studies show that although the metaphorical expressions take a large variety of linguistic forms, they can indeed be traced to a core of basic metaphorical concepts, many of which are common to *British* and Chinese cultures. Most of the basic metaphors



in the domain of sickness, borne out by the Shakespearean examples, are similar in English and Chinese. The Plath translations evidence the centrality of the Unity metaphor and the co-presence of the LOVE IS FIRE metaphor in both source and target cultures. The Basic Great Chain of Being as shared unconscious cultural model makes the HUMANS ARE PLANTS metaphor operational across the two cultures. Other concepts in common in the source and target cultures are image schemas like part-whole, up-down, in-out on which sickness and love metaphors are based; spatialization metaphors in which time is conceptualized in terms of space, such as LOVE IS A JOURNEY; body parts like head as king in the 'body politic' metaphor.

Whether the basic metaphors and the image schemas mentioned above are universal or not, we are not in a position to answer. According to our investigation they are common to the *British* and Chinese cultures. To ascertain their universality awaits further documentation. Edwin Gentzler, in criticizing aspects of the polysystem theory, expresses his opinion that 'a more extensive analysis of textual and cultural relations must take place before "universals" can be persuasively posited'.<sup>21</sup> I feel the same can be said in the case of the universality of metaphors. A little later in the same discussion, quoting Toury's view on family resemblances of original texts containing clusters of possibilities for translating,

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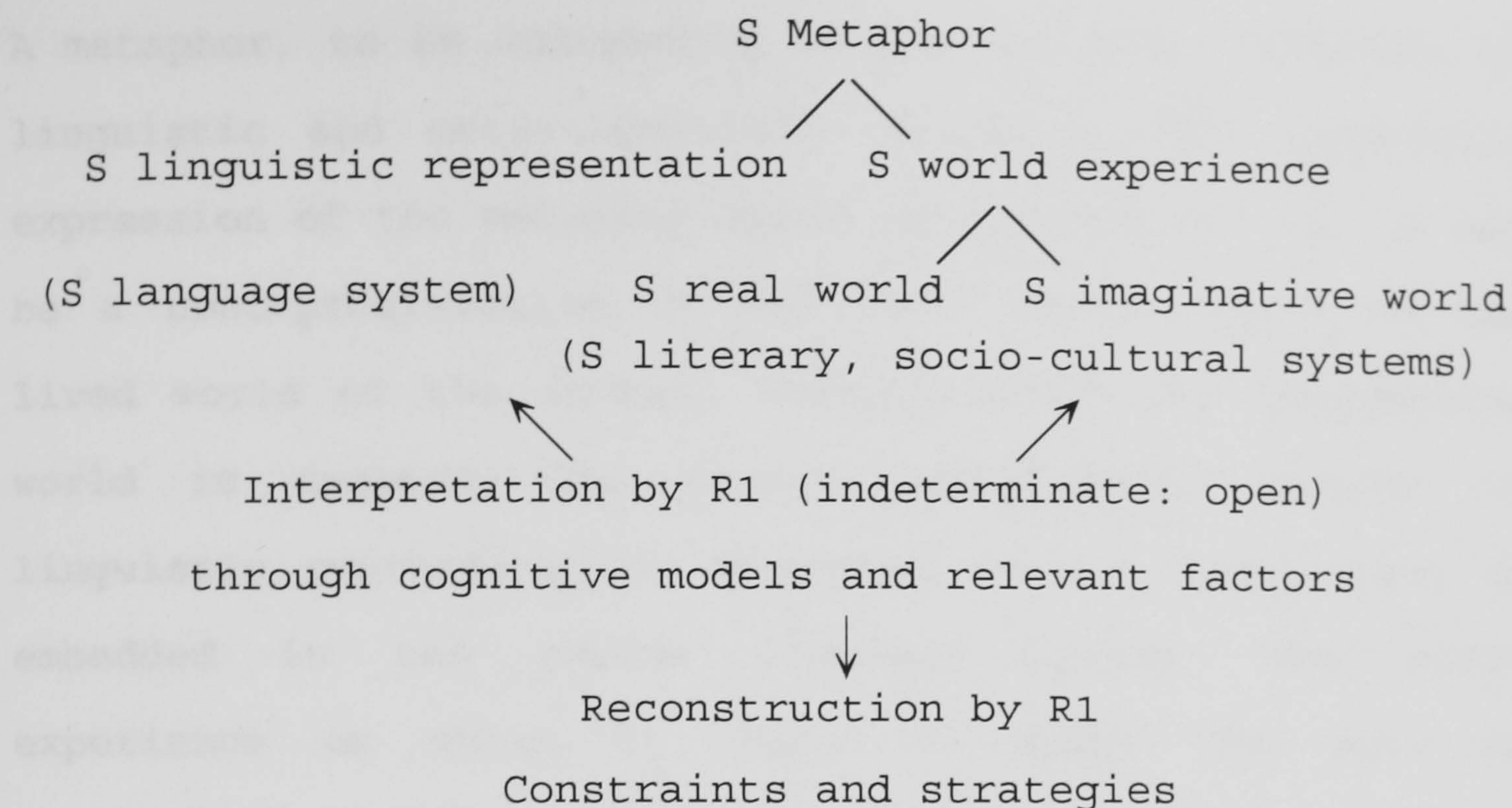
21 Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories* (London: Routledge, 1993), p.122.

Gentzler quite perceptively sums up the relational concept of translation: 'translation becomes a relative term, dependent upon the forces of history and the semiotic web called culture' (p.129). Even translation becomes a relative term. On what basis would one posit universals for translating metaphors? Suffice it to say that first, the presence of similar basic concepts in the source and target cultures facilitates translating metaphors on whose basis further elaborations of metaphorical concepts and metaphorical expressions can be built up. Non-basic or marginal metaphors not supported by common concepts and shared basic experience will encounter translation problems. Marginal metaphors that are innovative open up problems of a different kind. Second, what makes translating possible is not only overlap of experience but how that experience is shaped and structured by the source and target cultures in its socio-historical context.

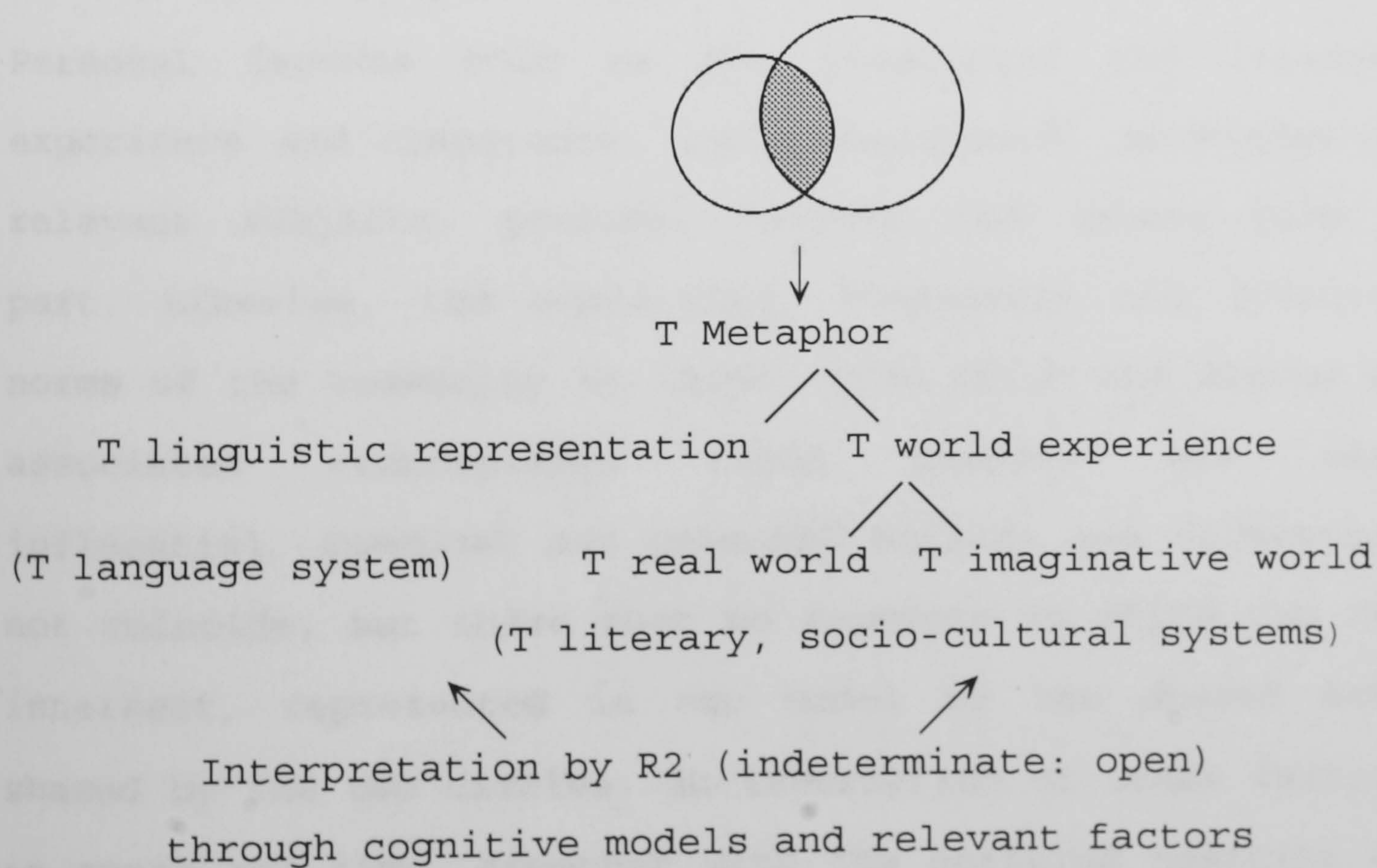
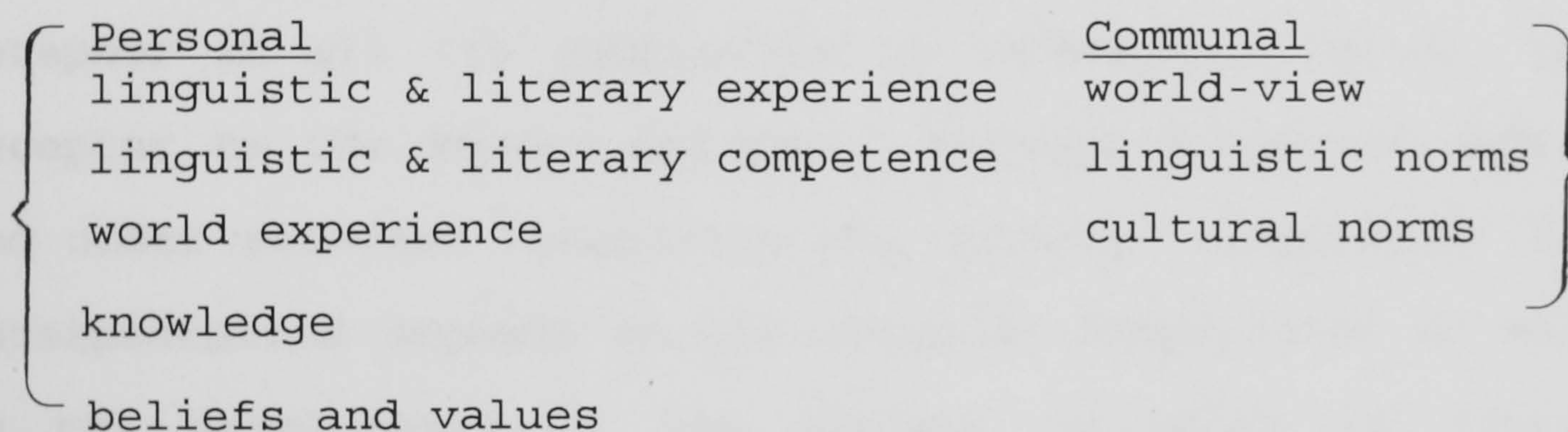
### 7.3.3 A model of the translating of poetic metaphor

Translating metaphor is to be understood in the wider context of what we have described as the process of translating in the Introduction. The model of the process of translating formulated in 0.1.4 has validity in our ensuing discussion as well. However in order to describe the specific problems and to highlight the factors involved in the translating of poetic metaphor, the following model is proposed:





Variable factors acting on R1 and R2





A metaphor, to be understood in its entirety, consists of linguistic and extra-linguistic elements. The linguistic expression of the metaphor opens up a world for us. It may be a conceptualization of the real world, which is the lived world of the author, through which the imaginative world is created. The source metaphorical concept in linguistic representation occurring in a literary text is embedded in the source language system. The world experience on which it draws to shape the real or imaginative world is supported by other relevant systems such as the literary and socio-cultural systems. The metaphor in all its complexity is interpreted by R1, the receptor to the source metaphor, through cognitive models and other relevant linguistic and cultural competence. The interpretation depends on his personal disposition as well as the development of the society in which he lives. Personal factors such as his linguistic and literary experience and competence, world experience, knowledge of relevant subjects, personal beliefs and values play a part. Likewise, the world-view, linguistic and cultural norms of the community at large, from which the system of associated commonplaces finds support are also influential. Communal and personal beliefs and values may not coincide, but there must be segments in which the two intersect, represented in the model by the shaded area shared by the two circles. An interaction of these factors in space and time, together with the shifting position of the metaphoric expression in text in the source and target polysystems, make the interpretation of the poetic



metaphor interminate and open. R1 takes on the role of the translator when he reconstructs the S metaphor into T metaphor, responding to the constraints by employing various strategies. The interpretation of the T metaphor by R2, receptors in the target culture, are likewise affected by the kind of factors that affected R1, in accordance with the specifics of the target polysystems in different space and time. The interpretation and reception of the translated metaphors vary in each particular case.

#### 7.3.4 Hierarchy of constraints

Below are listed the kinds of constraints identified at various levels of restructuring of the metaphors examined in the two case studies. I refrain from giving counts of their appearance in the translation examples, as the extent to which the constraints operate in relation to the translating process vary widely in individual cases so that if each appearance of a constraint is represented by one count, the resultant figure will definitely not be an accurate representation. Statistics in such cases, where the web of relationship is so intricate and individual factors highly variable, can be misleading.

1. Linguistic constraints at the surface structural level:
  - semantic association/connotation
  - semantic incongruity
  - polysemy
  - collocational cohesion

lexical combination

lexical sets

syntactic norm

syntactic position of lexical item

contextual fitness

contextual range

linguistic invention

idioms, proverbs, and precepts

habitual mode of expression

2. Literary constraints at the intermediate structural level:

genre requirements

dramatic and poetic tradition

action, theme, and character

dramatic tension

stage delivery

metre and rhythm

literary, classical, religious, historical allusions

private symbolic systems

3. Socio-cultural constraints at the deep structural level:

knowledge

belief

values

conceptual systems

cultural coherence



The list shows that the constraints imposed by the linguistic system at the surface level appear to be most numerous, those imposed by the literary system fewer and those imposed by the socio-cultural system least. In actual fact the three systems are interconnected, and the constraints on the surface level are likewise motivated by those related to the intermediate and deep levels. Semantic associations for instance are supported by underlying socio-historical realities and folk models of conceptualization. The dramatic tension created by the use of word-play is made possible by the phenomenon of polysemy. What I am trying to say is that the constraints are dynamic and their operation is more pervasive than is shown by the number of items on the list.

As can be expected we encounter the greatest number of constraints on the surface level at which metaphorical concepts find their linguistic expression. Semantic association is involved in almost every case, upon which the system of associated commonplaces has to be established if the metaphor is to be conveyed in the first place. Semantic incongruity, difference in connotation and emotive value, and variance in contextual range are all deterring factors. Of all the semantic elements, polysemy is very often the most insurmountable as the presence of an appropriate lexical item in the target system with the functionally relevant senses is unlikely in most cases. Other lexical problems such as incomparable lexical sets and lexical combinations in the source and target systems restrict the well-formedness of the target metaphor. As

the metaphor is not an isolated item but occurs in text, all syntactic, textual, and contextual constraints have bearings on its translation. Of these, collocational cohesion features prominently. Other linguistic devices such as the use of idioms, proverbs, and precepts create translation problems. Finally the habitual mode of expression or the so-called fashion of speaking, which can hardly be reducible to the formally marked patterns of a language, is a constraint not easily noticeable by the inexperienced translator but no less formidable.

The use of linguistic devices is circumscribed by the nature of the literary work in which metaphors occur. In recognition of this, a global approach has been adopted in the analysis of the translations. Starting from the widest set of implications, the genre requirements for the two case studies are different. We have seen how the translating of the metaphors of sickness is related to the action, theme, and characters of the play and that the dramatic and poetic designs are inseparable. Dramatic tension heightened by the use of word-play imposes constraints almost insurmountable in H1. The prosodic requirements of blank verse, the suiting of meaning to speech rhythm, and effective delivery on stage have all affected the choice of strategies for translating. Metaphors appearing in poems are subjected to the prosodic 'form' of poetry in terms of metre, rhyme, cadence, and sound effects, which may be quite impossible to approximate in a different linguistic medium, particularly in a language as different in its phonological makeup and



prosodic principles as Chinese is to English. As our corpus of the Plath translations concentrates on her late period when her poetic production is mainly in the form of free verse, there are not rigid and formal elements to be dealt with and translators have chosen to write in a verse form they see fit, free from the exacting requirements of metre and rhyme. Of more fundamental importance to the translating of Plath's metaphors is her private symbolic system, incorporating various classical and religious myths, literary and historical allusions, built upon a background of her personal beliefs, aspirations and obsessions. The acceptability of her innovative metaphors at variance with the target poetic tradition is an indeterminate factor depending on the development of the target literary system motivated by the changing socio-cultural system.

We find the least number of constraints listed under the socio-cultural system, but their presence is more pervasive than is shown. The cultural constraints are involved every time a linguistic expression is used and they support the other two systems at the deep structural level. Different aspects of the cultural system assume relative importance in accordance with the nature of the case studies. For instance, medical knowledge, in particular the humours theory, is central to understanding Shakespeare's medical metaphors, but historical and literary knowledge, though relevant, is not absolutely indispensable to grasping Plath's metaphors of love. Of cultural values, the ethical code of the target culture is

more crucial to the translating and reception of Plath's poetry. Belief is involved when we consider the cognitive models of metaphor supported by folk theory. Even an innovative complex of implications created by a poet is traceable to underlying beliefs and notions commonly shared in the community in the process of generating a metaphor.<sup>22</sup> Of paramount importance of course is the similarity of basic concepts in the source and target cultures. Lakoff asserts that the most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture (*Metaphors We Live By*, p.22). We have seen that when there is cultural coherence with the metaphors in the source and target cultures, for instance with the cultural values attached to health and sickness, translating is very much facilitated.

In addition to the constraints posited by the polysystem, the personal disposition of the translator and the receptor in the target language constitutes a variable factor most influential to the translating of the poetic metaphor. Interpretation of the metaphor in the literary text may vary widely in accordance with personal linguistic and literary competence and world experience. This is especially pronounced with regard to innovative

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22 Andras Sandor makes this point in his paper 'Metaphor and belief', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 42, no.2 (1986), 101-22 (p.106). He therefore prefers Black's earlier formulation of the term 'associated commonplaces' to his later one of 'complex of implications'.



metaphors. Misreading a single word (for example, 'solipsist' in 'Soliloquy of the Solipsist') may lead to an entirely different way of conceptualization and ultimately a misinterpretation of the theme of the poem. Reception of novel metaphors vary with changes in personal values and beliefs interacting with the changing horizons of the community.

#### 7.3.5 Strategies in translating

To overcome the constraints at various levels of restructuring, translators in the samples examined have devised different strategies with varying degrees of success. All the three modes of translation: '*sensu stricto*', substitution, and paraphrase described by Van Den Broeck, and the eight procedures enumerated by Newmark have been employed, if one uses their terminology. However no rules can be profitably formulated to govern which mode or procedure of translation may be adopted in practice as individual cases vary so much and in this respect positing the procedures appears to be a matter of little theoretical interest. Take the mode of substitution, which is quite frequently used when there is impediment for mapping on the source domain. For instance, Bian substitutes 'liver' for 'choler' to solve the problem of associating a body organ with anger in Chinese folk theory of medicine, and the metaphor SICKNESS/MADNESS IS WAR by the metaphors SICKNESS/MADNESS IS DESTRUCTION and SICKNESS/MADNESS IS FALLING DOWN when cultural coherence

is at stake. In the above examples we have the same mode used to overcome different constraints. Conversely, the same constraint or set of constraints has given rise to different modes of translation by different translators. The ring metaphor in 'Event' has been rendered by Zheng Min using the same metaphor with explication, and by Zhang Fenling resorting to substitution of an alternative conceptualization and literal statement. In our analysis of individual cases of translation we have seen that the choice of a translation strategy is motivated by different factors, including which elements to be retained or created at the expense of others, and the decision made by each translator very often follows his overall approach, constrained by his very first translation decision and subsequent ones with regard to that particular source text.

The strategies motivated by genre requirements in the Shakespearean case to ensure effective delivery include amplification, implications made more explicit by spelling out the hidden meaning, and using idioms and set phrases to minimize the distance between actor and audience or to add a moral tone. However footnotes, irrespective of their ineffectiveness in performance, are also used to bridge a gap of knowledge, for instance Elizabethan medical ideas, now obsolete. It may be of interest to note that although footnotes are at times used to summarize myths and allusions in translations of Plath's poems, more often the allusions are left unexplained and the proper names simply transliterated, leaving the reader to puzzle out the rich mythical implications. In dealing with the Plath poems the



translators tend to follow the source text very closely, carrying over the visual images and the literal meaning of the words wherever possible. This approach may be motivated by the target literary system's openness to innovation, as modern Chinese poetry has been receptive to novel forms and ideas, except for brief periods in the Mainland when the political situation was *unpropitious* and is still looking to the West for new forms and ideas.

This leads to the last set of strategies I would like to consider, which may be said to be motivated by the target polysystem. As supported by the translation samples, a competent translator makes best use of the resources of the target language and culture. On the language level, the productivity of compounding, especially that of forming temporary compounds in Chinese has been exploited to solve translating problems.<sup>23</sup> By introducing relevant Chinese characters or morphemes into the temporary compound, the translator is able to incorporate required implications of metaphorical complexes into the target text or to harmonize collocational incompatibilities. In another case, the morphological composition of a lexical item, for example, *maozai* with the worm concealed, has predisposed its choice as equivalent for 'canker'. Likewise the boil or ulcer in Chinese, with a similar set of associations has enhanced

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23 The productivity of compounding in Chinese is discussed in my paper entitled 'A Contrastive Analysis of Word-formation of NOUNS in English and Chinese', *Babel*, 25, no.3 (1979), 131-45.

its suitability as an image of corruption and is frequently used by translators. The target cultural system can be said to motivate the adoption of the traditional Chinese medical key concept of *yuanqi* or vital spirit and the substitution of the idea of reincarnation for the alien metaphor MARRIAGE IS THE RETURN OF THE DEAD. The strategy of compensation can also be identified, for instance, when the character of *bing* (sickness) is combined with lexical items to create metaphors of sickness when there is none in the source text, and when the metaphor SICKNESS IS TAIN'T is highlighted in the target text. The compensation mechanism by which non-metaphor is translated into metaphor or 0 metaphor into metaphor, can be explained, as suggested by Gideon Toury, in the light of the hypothesis that 'on occasion, the use of metaphors in the target text is hindered by certain norms originating in the target system, and not by anything in the nature of the source metaphors themselves'.<sup>24</sup> The compensation mechanism as well as strategies discussed in this paragraph can be understood as being motivated by norms in the target polysystem in response to constraints originating in the target polysystem.

#### 7.3.6. Translatability

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24 See Gideon Toury, 'A Rationale for descriptive translation studies', in *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, edited by Theo Hermans (London: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 16-41 (p.27).



Translatability is here considered with reference to actual performance evidenced by the published translations constituting my corpus, and not in absolute terms. Absolute translatability, or for that matter, absolute nontranslatability, cannot be determined outside the historical and social environment of actual performance, as a number of factors such as the personal disposition of the translator, the direction and stage of development of the target language and culture, and the contact between the source and target polysystems, has decisive impact on translatability. I tend to agree with Armin Paul Frank who makes the point that 'translatability is a *historical* concept: It is relative to the translations that have actually been made'.<sup>25</sup>

In our previous discussions we have touched upon certain views held by theorists that metaphors can simply be translated word for word either because there are similar 'fields of imagery' and 'structures of imagination' or, in the case of bold metaphors, because of their deviance from the source text. The above views give the false impression that metaphors are easily translatable. I do not regard a metaphor as translatable simply by the fact that it is possible to have its image,

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25 Frank's point of view is adopted from Rudolf Kloepper. See Armin Paul Frank, 'Translating and Translated Poetry: The Producer's and the Historian's Perspectives', in *Translation Studies: The State of the Art*, edited by Kitty M. van Leuven-Zwart and Ton Naaijken (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1991), pp.115-40 (p.121).

or in our case, the metaphorical concept represented in a linguistic expression in the target language. Translatability is determined in terms of whether the translated metaphor fulfils the global requirements in the literary text, namely, that it establishes adequate relationships on all relevant levels in the target literary text.

Our examples show that metaphors are translatable when the basic metaphorical concepts in the source and target systems are similar. Cultural coherence (the association of similar cultural values to the concepts), makes it possible for a similar manipulation of the symbolic meanings of the target language metaphors in their literary contexts. Over and above these basic conditions, literary coherence in terms of genre requirements and convention, and functionally relevant linguistic resources, are secondary conditions of translatability.

Our two case studies deal with basic-level concepts: sickness and love. At this level we find the most commonly used labels for entities to which the concept applies.<sup>26</sup> As can be expected there is little difficulty for finding translation equivalents whether for the more universally based 'sickness', which is invariably translated as *bing*, and the culturally-specific romantic variety of 'love', which is translated as *ai*, *qing*, or *aqing*. It is with subordinate categories such as 'pleurisy', 'choler', and

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<sup>26</sup> See George Lakoff, 'Some Empirical Results about the Nature of Concepts', *Mind and Language*, 4, nos. 1 and 2 (1989), 103-129 (p.107).



'melancholy' that target language parallels vary. Of course characteristic usages or fashions of speaking in the target linguistic system restrict the occurrence of the morpheme *bing*, such as its resistance to combining with abstract terms.

Nontranslatability occurs when the translator fails to overcome the constraints imposed by the polysystems. He may fail on one level, for instance, on account of semantic association, polysemy, medical and literary knowledge, or he may fail on several levels. On the whole if there are fewer constraints and the constraints come from the same level, translatability is higher. If there are more constraints involved and on different levels, translatability is low. Metaphorical complexes in H1, H16, and those exemplified in the concluding stanzas of 'Lady Lazarus' and 'Purdah' are cases in point.

I could perhaps attempt to answer the question whether novel metaphors are more translatable, as Klopfer and some of the theorists responding to him seem to think. Our examples show that translatability does not depend on 'novelty' but on the constraints imposed by the metaphor and their possibility of being overcome. The novel metaphor ERUPTION IS BARK failed to be translated because of the lack of polysemy in the Chinese equivalent of 'barked about' to invoke the image schema of the tree to be superimposed onto the human body. We may say that a novel metaphor coupled with linguistic creativity proves difficult to translate. Another instance of a novel metaphor resisting translation can be cited of MARRIAGE AS

RETURN OF THE DEAD, probably because the concept is alien to the target culture. On the other hand, the novel metaphor BROKEN MARRIAGE/LOVE IS DISMEMBERMENT is readily translated since bodily experience is less mediated by culture. The linguistic expressions of the bold metaphorical complexes at the end of 'Lady Lazarus' and 'Purdah' get literally translated as far as is possible within the limits of the target language system. However this is no guarantee that the intricate relations at all levels can be set up in the target polysystem. In other words, it is doubtful whether the target language metaphors can reproduce similar cultural and lexical resonances as those produced by the source language metaphors in the source polysystems, or, to put it in Lakoff's terms, whether it is possible to trigger off a kind of *reverberation* through a coherent network of entailments (*Metaphors We Live By*, p.140). What Van Den Broeck says on impediments in translating private metaphors applies to this case: 'large differences in aesthetic and moral codes between the SL and TL may impose certain constraints of a prohibitive nature on the translation, e.g., when the target system is governed by rigid conventions such that an SL metaphor is rejected for its boldness, lack of modesty, etc.' ('The Limits of Translatability Exemplified by Metaphor Translation', p.81). The unpredictability of reception of Plath's bold metaphors in the target polysystem is due <sup>in part</sup> to their conflicts with the Confucian ethical code and the Chinese poetic tradition.



The above discussions show that what is relevant to the translatability of metaphor is not so much the overlap of experience, but how that experience is shaped and structured by the SL and TL language and culture. Sickness to be sure is an experience shared by all human beings, but we have found that the difference in the metaphors of sickness in English and Chinese and the difficulty of translating them can be traced to the cosmological gulf separating the two cultures. We have also discovered that in translating metaphors of love, the ethical system is at the core of the problems of transfer. Cultural difference however is not unchanging and unchangeable. The language relativity principle implies that knowing dissimilar languages directly (or indirectly through translation) enables us to share and shift perspectives and to rethink our habitual modes of perception. With all these constraints and variables, translating poetic metaphor is more or less possible depending on the net of relationship established at the time of translating. My findings in the two case studies have allowed me to point out certain regularities and patterns in the process of translating, which may be regarded as constituents to an overall theory of translating poetic metaphor. More languages other than English and Chinese and more domains of experience other than the two I have examined will have to be studied before anything approaching a full theory for the translating of poetic metaphor can be formulated.

## Appendix I: A list of Examples from *Hamlet*

Original text from Harold Jenkins, ed., *Hamlet* (London and New York: Methuen, 1982).

Translations quoted from:

Bian Zhilin 卞之琳, tr., *Hamuleite* 哈姆雷特 (Beijing: Zuoja chubanshe, 1956).

Cao Weifeng 曹未風, tr., *Hanmulaite* 漢姆萊特 (Shanghai: Xinwenyi chubanshe, 1955).

Liang Shiqiu 梁實秋, tr., *Hamuleite* 哈姆雷特 (Taipei: Yuandong tushu gongsi, 1968; first published in 1936).

Lin Tongji 林同濟, tr., *Danmai wangzi Hamulei de Beiju* 丹麥王子哈姆雷的悲劇 (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1982).

Sun Dayu 孫大雨, tr., *Hanmolaide* 罕秣萊德 (Shanghai: Yiwon chubanshe, 1991).

Tian Han 田漢, tr., *Hamengleite* 哈孟雷特 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1922).

Zhu Shenghao 朱生豪, tr., *Hanmulaituo* 漢姆萊脫 (Beijing: Zuoja chubanshe, 1954; first published in 1947).

H1 Guild. The King, sir—  
Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?  
Guild. Is in his retirement marvellous  
distempered.  
Ham. With drink, sir?  
Guild. No, my lord, with choler.  
Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to  
signify this to the doctor, for for me to  
put him to his purgation would perhaps  
plunge him into more choler. (3.2.291-9)

紀 殿下,王上——

哈 嗯,先生,王上怎麼樣?

紀 他退回寢宮,感到非常不舒服。

哈 喝酒喝醉了?

紀 不,殿下,肝火發了。

哈 你該去找他的醫生,才顯得你見多識廣,要叫我去給他



下藥，只怕清滌不了他的內結，反而更加激動了他的肝  
火。  
(Bian, p.101)

H2 Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear  
Blasting his wholesome brother. (3.4.64-5)

這是你現今的丈夫；像是一枝霉爛的麥穗，把他的健康的哥哥都害得凋萎  
了。  
(Liang, p.128)

這是你現在的丈夫，像一個灰麥穗  
損害它健好的弟兄。  
(Bian, p.113)

這兒，是您現在的男人，  
簡直一絡麥穗透心爛，摧毀着  
秀挺挺的同根生。  
(Lin, pp.99-100)

H3 Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus  
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.  
(2.2.17-8)

他究竟有些什麼秘密的心事，為我們所不知道的，也許一旦公開之後，我們就可以  
替他下對症的藥餌。  
(Zhu, pp.174-5)

有什麼心病把他折磨到這樣，  
讓我們明白了，也就好對症下藥。  
(Bian, p.50)

H4 And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought  
(3.1.84-5)

也就這樣子，決斷決行的本色  
蒙上了慘白的一層思慮的病容。  
(Bian, p.81)

H5 It warms the very sickness in my heart  
(4.7.54)

我涼了半截的心裡一下子熱和了  
(Bian, p.147)

我心頭本暗淡，  
就變得歡暢。  
(Sun, p.185)







H15      The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit.  
(5.2.358)

猛烈的藥性攻得我剩不了一口氣。 (Bian, p.183)

強烈的毒藥壓倒了我的元陽 (Sun, p.230)

H16      And in the porches of my ears did pour  
The leperous distilment, whose effect  
Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
The natural gates and alleys of the body,  
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset  
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,  
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust  
All my smooth body. (1.5.63-73)

把我的兩隻耳朵一齊都灌了。  
這一種痲瘋式毒精跟人的血液  
死不兩立，會馬上就發作起來，  
滴溜溜像水銀一樣，無孔不入，  
一下子通遍了全身的大門小徑，  
力道猛極了，像酸液滴進了牛奶，  
一下子把全身鮮活流暢的血液  
都凝結起來。我的血液就這樣了；  
而且立刻有無數的疹泡，痲瘋樣，  
帶着可怕的疤片，蓋住了我全身  
光滑的皮膚。

(Bian, pp.36-7)

把那引發起全身惡癩的毒精  
灌進了我的耳孔去；那藥性一發  
就跟人周身的血液水火不相容，  
只頃刻之間，快得和水銀相似，  
它通行無阻，穿門過路處處到，  
而且它發作快而猛，像醋酸滴進  
牛奶，把我的稀薄而健全的血液  
凝斂凍結了起來：我的血便這樣；  
而且頓時立刻有疹疤散佈開，  
像是大痲瘋，可恨的嘔人的惡癩  
結滿我光滑的全身。

(Sun, p.35)

H17                      Heaven's face does glow  
O'er this solidity and compound mass  
With tristful visage, as against the doom,  
Is thought-sick at the act. (3.4.48-51)



天都臉紅了；  
 是啊，腳底下這一片茫茫大地  
 也愁容滿面，像見了世界的末日了：  
 就爲的這等事！

(Bian, p.112)

這行爲，天看到  
 都臉紅。哪怕這堅實厚載的大地，  
 也遍體發高燒，好像末日已臨頭，  
 痛定又思痛。

(Lin, p.99)

H18 This bodes some strange eruption to our state.  
 (1.1.72)

這恐怕是預兆國家有非常的變故。

(Bian, p.7)

H19 Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.  
 (1.4.90)

丹麥的國家裡怕有點烏七八糟。

(Bian, p.33)

在丹麥境內一定有些腐爛見不得人的事。

(Cao, p.33)

H20 By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,  
 (1.4.27-8)

或者是由於某一種特殊的氣質  
 過分發展到超出了理性的範圍，

(Bian, p.30)

由於某一種性癖有過度的滋長，  
 時常衝破了理性的藩籬與堡寨，

(Sun, p.29)

H21 O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
 The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,  
 sword,  
 Th'expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
 The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
 Th'observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!  
 (3.1.152-6)

啊，一世的英才就這樣坍倒了！  
 朝廷人士的眼睛，學者的舌頭，  
 軍人的利劍，國家的期望和花朵，  
 風流時尚的鏡子，文雅的典範，  
 舉世矚目的中心，倒了，全倒了！

(Bian, pp.84-5)

H22      Now see that noble and most sovereign reason  
 Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh,  
 That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth  
 Blasted with ecstasy. (3.1.159-62)

如今卻看着他高貴無上的理智  
 好像銀鈴兒攪亂了，失去了和諧；  
 看着他青春年少的無比的風貌  
 叫瘋狂一下子摧折了！ (Bian, p.85)

——現在卻見他那高貴的尊嚴  
 的理性，好像清悠悅耳的鈴兒搖出了調子，弄的粗燥難  
 聽了；他那誰也比不上的春花一般的模樣兒也被這口狂  
 亂的風吹凋萎不堪了： (Tian, p.77)

H23      There's something in his soul  
 O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,  
 And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose  
 Will be some danger; (3.1.166-9)

他顯然另外有心事  
 叫他的憂鬱在心頭伏窩孵卵；  
 我實在擔心孵出來不是別的，  
 是一種危險； (Bian, p.85)

H24      How pregnant  
 sometimes his replies are — a happiness that  
 often madness hits on, which reason and sanity  
 could not so prosperously be delivered of. (2.2.208-11)

有時候他話裡  
 倒不少涵義啊！瘋裡撞靈機，脫口生妙趣。理智健全  
 的，反而遠不及。 (Lin, p.55)

H25      poor Ophelia  
 Divided from herself and her fair judgment,  
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts;  
 (4.5.84-6)

可憐的歐菲麗姬  
 弄得她的人同她正確的判斷力分了家，  
 沒有這個，我們都不過是影子，是畜牲： (Cao, pp.125-6)



## Appendix II: Chinese translations of Sylvia Plath's Poems

### 1. Translators

C	Chen Dejin 陳德錦
CM	Chen Maiping 陳邁平
CG	Cheng Guangwei 程光煒, Zhao Guotai 趙國泰, and Meng Shiwei 蒙詩偉
H	Huang Canran 黃燦然
J	Jiang Feng 江楓
L	Li Zhen 李震
M	Meng Meng 孟猛
PJ	Peng Jingxi 彭鏡禧 and Xia Yansheng 夏燕生
PY	Peng Yu 彭予
S	Shen Rui 沈睿
T	Tao Jie 陶潔
W	Wu Lao 吳勞
Y	Yang Tongrong 楊通榮 and Ding Tingsen 丁廷森
ZC	Zhang Cuo 張錯 (alias Zhang Zhen'ao 張振翱 and Dominic Chang)
ZD	Zhao Qiong 趙瓊 and Dao Zi 島子
ZF	Zhang Fenling 張芬齡
ZJ	Zhang Jian 章簡 (alias Luo Zhanglan 羅章蘭)
ZY	Zhao Yiheng 趙毅衡
ZM	Zheng Min 鄭敏
ZZ	Zheng Zhen 鄭臻 (alias Zheng Shusen 鄭樹森 and William Tay)
ZA	Zhuang Yan 莊彥

### 2. List of Poems with different translated versions

Mad Girl's Love Song, 1953. ZC  
 Prospect, 1956. H  
 Soliloquy of the Solipsist, 1956. CG  
 Resolve, 1956. CG  
 All the Dead Dears, 1957. ZA

Frog Autumn, 1958. H, PJ, ZZ  
 Metaphors, 20 Mar 1959. H, T, ZZ  
 Man in Black, 1959. ZY  
 Medallion, 1959. ZD, ZY  
 The Colossus, 1959. ZF, ZD  
 Witch Burning (Poem for a Birthday), 4 Nov 1959. ZD  
 Mushrooms, 13 Nov 1959. ZJ  
 You're, Jan/Feb 1960. ZJ  
 Stillborn, 1960, H  
 Love Letter, 16 Oct 1960. ZF  
 A Life, 18 Nov 1960. ZF  
 Morning Song, 19 Feb 1961. CM, J, W, ZD, ZF, ZJ, ZY  
 I Am Vertical, 28 March 1961. H  
 Blackberrying, 23 Sept 1961. ZF  
 The Moon and the Yew Tree, 22 Oct 1961. CM, ZC  
 Mirror, 23 Oct 1961. Y  
 Little Fugue, 2 Apr 1962. ZD  
 Crossing the Water, 4 Apr 1962. C, ZD, ZY  
 Elm, 19 Apr 1962. ZD, ZF, ZM  
 Event, 21 May 1962. ZF, ZM  
 Berck-Plage, 30 June 1962. ZD  
 Poppies in July, 20 July 1962. C, CM  
 The Arrival of the Bee Box, 4 Oct 1962. PY, ZF, ZJ  
 The Swarm, 7 Oct 1962. ZF  
 The Applicant, 11 Oct 1962. CM, J, ZF, ZJ, ZY  
 Daddy, 12 Oct 1962. W, ZA, ZD, ZF, ZY  
 Fever 103°, 20 Oct 1962. M, ZA, ZD, ZF  
 Cut, 24 Oct 1962. ZD  
 Ariel, 27 Oct 1962. M, ZA, ZD, ZF, ZM  
 Poppies in October, 27 Oct, 1962. C, ZD, ZY  
 Nick and the Candlestick, 29 Oct, 1962. ZD  
 Purdah, 29 Oct 1962. ZM  
 Lady Lazarus, 23-29 Oct 1962. J, L, S, W, ZA, ZD,  
 ZF, ZM  
 The Couriers, 4 Nov 1962. CM, ZD, ZY  
 The Night Dances, 6 Nov 1962, ZD  
 Gulliver, 6 Nov 1962. ZF  
 Letter in November, 11 Nov 1962. ZD



Death & Co., 14 Nov 1962. ZD, ZF  
 Years, 16 Nov 1962. ZD  
 Mary's Song, 19 Nov 1962. ZD, PY  
 Winter Trees, 26 Nov 1962. C, ZD, ZM  
 Brasilia, 1 Dec 1962. ZD  
 Childless Woman, 1 Dec 1962. PY  
 Sheep in Fog, 2 Dec 1962, 28 Jan 1963. CM, ZM  
 The Munich Mannequins, 28 Jan 1963. ZD  
 Totem, 28 Jan 1963. ZD  
 Child, 28 Jan 1963. ZC  
 Mystic, 1 Feb 1963. ZF  
 Words, 1 Feb 1963. CM, J, Y, ZD, ZJ, ZY  
 Contusion, 4 Feb 1963. ZD  
 Balloons, 5 Feb 1963. ZJ  
 Edge, 5 Feb 1963. S, W, ZD, ZF

### 3. List of Translators with titles of poems and publications

Chen Dejin: Winter Trees, Crossing the Water, Mushrooms, Poppies in July, and Poppies in October, in *Li Poetry Bimonthly* 笠雙月詩刊 no.172 (15 December 1992), 92-97.

Chen Maiping: (i) Morning Song, The Couriers, Sheep in Fog, and The Applicant, in *Cao yuan* 草原, 1986 no.1, 64-66.

(ii) Morning Song, The Couriers, The Applicant, The Moon and the Yew Tree, Poppies in July, and Words in *Guoji shitan* 國際詩壇, vol.1, edited by Peng Yanjiao 彭燕郊 (Kuilin: Lijiang chubanshe, 1987), pp.95-101.

Cheng Guangwei, Zhao Guotai, and Meng Shiwei: Resolve and Soliloquy of the Solipsist, in *Ershi shiji zhuming nüshiren jiazuo meixi* 二十世紀世界著名女詩人佳作美析 (Haikou: Hainan sheying meishu chubanshe, 1990), pp.11-16.

Huang Canran: Metaphors, Frog Autumn, Prospect, Stillborn, and I Am Vertical in *Li Poetry Bimonthly* no.172 (15 December 1992), 97-99.

Jiang Feng: Morning Song, Lady Lazarus, The Applicant, and Words in *Meiguo xiandai shichao* 美國現代詩鈔 (Xining: Qinghai renmin chubanshe, 1986), pp.290-299.

Li Zhen: Lady Lazarus in *Shijie mingshi sanbaishou* 世界名詩三百首, edited by Meng Zhaoqiang 孟昭強 and Zhou Yihu 周翼虎 (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1992), pp.735-39.

Meng Meng: Fever 103° and Ariel in *Waiguo ershi shiji chunshuqingshi jinghua* 外國二十世紀純抒情詩精華, edited by Wang Jiabin 王家新 and Tang Xiaodu 唐曉渡 (Beijing: Zuoja chubanshe, 1992), pp.71-75.

Peng Jingxi and Xia Yansheng: Frog Autumn in *Hao shi dajia du: ying mei duanshi wushishou shangxi* 好詩大家讀: 英美短詩五十首賞析 (Taipei: Shulin, 1989), pp.180-181.

Peng Yu: Childless Woman, Mary's Song, and The Arrival of the Bee Box in *Ershi shiji ying mei shuqingshixuan* 二十世紀英美抒情詩選 (Kaifeng: Henan daxue chubanshe, 1987), pp.284-89.

Shen Rui: Lady Lazarus and Edge in *Waiguo ershi shiji chunshuqingshi jinghua*, edited by Wang Jiabin and Tang Xiaodu, pp.75-81.

Tao Jie: Metaphors in *Shijie mingshi sanbaishou*, edited by Meng Zhaoqiang and Zhou Yihu, p.734.

Wu Lao: Lady Lazarus, Daddy, Morning Song, and Edge in *Gudude meigui -- Dangdai waiguo shuqingshixuan* 孤獨的玫瑰——當代外國抒情詩選, edited by the editorial department of *Waiguo wenxue* 外國文學 (Shanghai: Shanghai yiwu chubanshe, 1986), pp.283-96.

Yang Tongrong and Ding Tingsen: Words and Mirror in *Dangdai meiguo shixuan* 當代美國詩選 (Guiyang: Guizhou renmin chubanshe, 1986), pp.121-24.

Zhang Cuo: Mad Girl's Love Song, Child, and The Moon and the Yew Tree in *Dangdai meiguo nüshiren shixuan*



當代美國女詩人詩選 (Taipei: Altai Press, 1981), pp.121-28.

Zhang Fenling: (i) Morning Song, Elm, Daddy, The Colossus, Lady Lazarus, The Swarm, Fever 103°, Mystic, Ariel, The Applicant, Gulliver, Event, Blackberrying, Love Letter, A Life, The Arrival of the Bee Box, Edge, and Death & Co. in *Zhong wai wenxue* 中外文學, 7, no.9 (February 1979), 151-85; no.10 (March 1979), 144-77.

(ii) revised translations of the above poems in *Xiandaishi qishi lu* 現代詩啓示錄 by Zhang Fenling (Taipei: Shulin, 1992), pp.220-56.

Zhang Jian: (i) Morning Song, Mushrooms, and The Arrival of the Bee Box in *Hong Kong Times* 香港時報, *Wenxue tiandi* 文學天地: no. 637 (23 July 1989), p.13; no. 642 (27 August 1989), p.13; no.643 (3 September 1989), p.14.

(ii) Words, Balloons, and You're in *The Blue Stars Poetry Quarterly* 藍星詩刊, no.21 (October 1989), 137-41.

(iii) The Applicant in *Hong Kong Times*, *Wenxue tiandi*, no.671 (25 March 1990), p.14.

Zhao Qiong and Dao Zi: Morning Song, Years, Lady Lazarus, Fever 103°, Words, Cut, Nick and the Candlestick, The Munich Mannequins, Contusion, Ariel, The Night Dances, Poppies in October, Edge, Letter in November, Daddy, The Couriers, Winter Trees, Medallion, Crossing the Water, Totem, Little Fugue, The Colossus, Mary's Song, Witch Burning (from Poem for a Birthday), Brasilia, Elm, Berck-Plage, and Death & Co. in *Meiguo zibaipai shixuan* 美國自白派詩選 (Kuilin: Lijiang Chubanshe, 1987), pp.49-119.

Zhao Yiheng: Man in Black, Medallion, Morning Song, The Applicant, Poppies in October, Words, Daddy, Crossing the Water, and The Couriers in *Meiguo xiandai shixuan* 美國現代詩選 (Beijing: Waiguo wenxue chubanshe, 1985), pp.602-17.

Zheng Min: (i) Sheep in Fog, Elm, and Ariel in *Meiguo dangdai shixuan* 美國當代詩選 (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1987), pp.251-256.

(ii) Lady Lazarus in *Oumei xiandaipai shiji* 歐美現代派詩集 edited by Dong Sen 冬森 (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1989), pp.85-89.

(iii) Event, Purdah, and Winter Trees in *One Hundred Modern English Poems*, edited by Mary M.Y. Fung (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1992), pp.398-409.

Zheng Zhen: Frog Autumn and Metaphors in *Li Poetry Bimonthly*, no.34 (15 December, 1969), p.36.

Zhuang Yan: All the Dead Dears, Lady Lazarus, Ariel, Daddy, and Fever 103° in *Ershi shiji meiguo shixuan* 二十世紀美國詩選 (Shenyang: Chunfeng chubanshe, 1990), pp.530-44.



Appendix III: 'Love Letter', 'Event', 'Daddy', 'Fever  
103°', 'Lady Lazarus' and their Chinese translations

Love Letter<sup>1</sup>

Not easy to state the change you made.  
If I'm alive now, then I was dead,  
Though, like a stone, unbothered by it,  
Staying put according to habit.

5 You didn't just toe me an inch, no—  
Nor leave me to set my small bald eye  
Skyward again, without hope, of course,  
Of apprehending blueness, or stars.

10 That wasn't it. I slept, say: a snake  
Masked among black rocks as a black rock  
In the white hiatus of winter.  
Like my neighbors, taking no pleasure  
In the million perfectly-chiseled  
Cheeks alighting each moment to melt

15 My cheek of basalt. They turned to tears,  
Angels weeping over dull natures,  
But didn't convince me. Those tears froze.  
Each dead head had a visor of ice.

20 And I slept on like a bent finger.  
The first thing I saw was sheer air  
And the locked drops rising in a dew  
Limpid as spirits. Many stones lay  
Dense and expressionless round about.  
I didn't know what to make of it.

25 I shone, mica-scaled, and unfolded  
To pour myself out like a fluid  
Among bird feet and the stems of plants.  
I wasn't fooled. I knew you at once.

30 Tree and stone glittered, without shadows.  
My finger-length grew lucent as glass.  
I started to bud like a March twig:  
An arm and a leg, an arm, a leg.  
From stone to cloud, so I ascended.  
Now I resemble a sort of god

35 Floating through the air in my soul-shift  
Pure as a pane of ice. It's a gift.

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1 All the five poems in Appendix III are taken from  
Sylvia Plath, *Collected Poems*, edited by Ted Hughes  
(London: Faber and Faber, 1981).

## 情書

張芬齡譯<sup>2</sup>

很難述說你帶來的轉變。  
 如果我現在活著，那麼過去就等於死亡，  
 雖然，像石塊一樣，不受干擾，  
 習慣於靜止。  
 你不只是踩到了我一吋，不——  
 也不只是叫我空茫的小眼  
 再一次向天空抬起，當然，不敢奢望，  
 去了解蔚藍，或者星辰。

不是這樣的。我睡著，這麼說吧：一條  
 於黑岩中偽裝成黑岩的蛇  
 在寒冬雪白的裂縫中——  
 像我的芳鄰，不喜歡  
 萬千雕鑿完美的  
 面頰，無時不降下來融化  
 我玄武巖的雙頰。他們化做眼淚，  
 那是天使為單調的大自然哭泣，  
 但這未能使我信服。眼淚凍結。  
 每一個僵死的頭顱都戴著冰的面具。

我像根彎曲的手指繼續睡著。  
 我首先看到稀薄的空氣  
 緊鎖的水滴自露珠升起  
 明澈如精靈。許多岩塊  
 堆集，面無表情地環聚著。  
 我不知道這該如何解釋。  
 我發光，剝落，攤開  
 像流體把自己傾出一般  
 在鳥足和樹莖群中。  
 我未受愚弄。我立刻就認清了你。

樹石閃爍，沒有陰影。  
 我的指長透明如玻璃。  
 我像三月的嫩芽抽放：  
 一隻手臂和一條腿，手臂，腿。  
 踏石而上雲，我如是攀爬。  
 現在我彷彿某種神祇  
 穿空飄浮於換新的靈魂之中  
 純潔如片冰。這是天賜。

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2 All of Zhang Fenling's translations in this Appendix are from *Xiandaishi qishi lu* (Taipei: Shulin, 1992)



## Event

How the elements solidify!—  
The moonlight, that chalk cliff  
In whose rift we lie

5 Back to back. I hear an owl cry  
From its cold indigo.  
Intolerable vowels enter my heart.

The child in the white crib revolves and sighs,  
Opens its mouth now, demanding.  
His little face is carved in pained, red wood.

10 Then there are the stars—ineradicable, hard.  
One touch: it burns and sickens.  
I cannot see your eyes.

Where apple bloom ices the night  
I walk in a ring,  
15 A groove of old faults, deep and bitter.

Love cannot come here.  
A black gap discloses itself.  
On the opposite lip

20 A small white soul is waving, a small white maggot.  
My limbs, also, have left me.  
Who has dismembered us?

The dark is melting. We touch like cripples.

## 事件

## 張芬齡譯

看自然力量如何凝固！——  
月光，那灰白的峭壁  
在它的罅隙裡我們躺臥

背靠著背。我聽見貓頭鷹啼叫  
自它冷冷的深色紫藍。  
刺耳的母音走進了心坎。

小孩在白色的小床裡打轉歎息，  
張開嘴巴，招喚著。  
他的小臉嵌入痛苦的，紅木

然後星星出來了——根深柢固，堅實的。  
一經觸摸：就發熱作嘔。  
我看不見你的眼睛。

在那蘋果花凍結夜晚的地方  
我繞圈而行，  
古老的過失固定反應著，深刻且痛苦。

愛不能到達此處。  
黑色的深溝將自己暴露。  
在相對的唇瓣上

一具瘦小純白的靈魂在揮手，一條白色的小蛆。  
我的四肢，也是一樣，離我遠去。  
是誰支解我們？

黑暗正在融化。我們像跛行者摸索前進。

## 事件

鄭敏譯<sup>3</sup>

元素們是怎樣的凝結在一起！  
月光，那白堊的峭壁  
在它的裂縫間

我們躺着，背靠背。我聽見  
夜梟在呼喚，從那冰冷的藍色中。  
難以忍受的元音進入我的內心。

嬰兒在白色的搖籃中扭動歎息，  
現在張開它的小嘴，尋求着。  
他的小臉是飽受摧殘的紅木雕成。

而後還有星星——無法抹去，堅硬。  
觸摸一下：它燃燒，嘔吐。  
我瞧不見你的眼睛。

在蘋果花冷凍了黑夜的地方  
我踏着戒指的圓圈散步，  
一個舊過、深恨磨成的故轍。

愛情不能來此。  
黑色的斷裂顯露了自己。  
那另外一片嘴唇上

一個白色的小靈魂在搖晃，小肉蟲。  
我的四肢，也已離我。  
誰肢解了我們？

黑暗在溶化。我們像殘疾人樣摸觸。

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3 From *One Hundred Modern English Poems*, ed. by Mary M.Y. Fung (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1992).



## Daddy

You do not do, you do not do  
 Any more, black shoe  
 In which I have lived like a foot  
 For thirty years, poor and white,  
 5 Barely daring to breathe or Achoo.

Daddy, I have had to kill you.  
 You died before I had time—  
 Marble-heavy, a bag full of God,  
 Ghastly statue with one gray toe  
 10 Big as a Frisco seal

And a head in the freakish Atlantic  
 Where it pours bean green over blue  
 In the waters off beautiful Nauset.  
 I used to pray to recover you.  
 15 Ach, du.

In the German tongue, in the Polish town  
 Scraped flat by the roller  
 Of wars, wars, wars,  
 But the name of the town is common.  
 20 My Polack friend

Says there are a dozen or two.  
 So I never could tell where you  
 Put your foot, your root,  
 I never could talk to you.  
 25 The tongue stuck in my jaw.

It stuck in a barb wire snare.  
 Ich, ich, ich, ich,  
 I could hardly speak.  
 I thought every German was you.  
 30 And the language obscene

An engine, an engine  
 Chuffing me off like a Jew.  
 A Jew to Dachau, Auschwitz, Belsen.  
 I began to talk like a Jew.  
 35 I think I may well be a Jew.

The snows of the Tyrol, the clear beer of Vienna  
 Are not very pure or true.  
 With my gipsy ancestress and my weird luck  
 And my Taroc pack and my Taroc pack  
 40 I may be a bit of a Jew.

I have always been scared of you,  
 With your Luftwaffe, your gobbledygoo.  
 And your neat mustache  
 And your Aryan eye, bright blue.  
 45 Panzer-man, panzer-man, O You—

Not God but a swastika  
 So black no sky could squeak through.  
 Every woman adores a Fascist,  
 The boot in the face, the brute  
 50 Brute heart of a brute like you.

You stand at the blackboard, daddy,  
 In the picture I have of you,  
 A cleft in your chin instead of your foot  
 But no less a devil for that, no not  
 55 Any less the black man who

Bit my pretty red heart in two.  
 I was ten when they buried you.  
 At twenty I tried to die  
 And get back, back, back to you.  
 60 I thought even the bones would do.

But they pulled me out of the sack,  
 And they stuck me together with glue.  
 And then I knew what to do.  
 I made a model of you,  
 65 A man in black with a Meinkampf look

And a love of the rack and the screw.  
 And I said I do, I do.  
 So daddy, I'm finally through.  
 The black telephone's off at the root,  
 70 The voices just can't worm through.

If I've killed one man, I've killed two—  
 The vampire who said he was you  
 And drank my blood for a year,  
 Seven years, if you want to know.  
 75 Daddy, you can lie back now.

There's a stake in your fat black heart  
 And the villagers never liked you.  
 They are dancing and stamping on you.  
 They always *knew* it was you.  
 80 Daddy, daddy, you bastard, I'm through.

爹地

張芬齡譯

你再也不能，再也不能  
 這樣做，黑色的鞋子  
 我像隻腳在其中生活了



三十個年頭，可憐且蒼白，  
僅敢呼吸或打噴嚏。

爹地，我早該殺了你。  
我還沒來得及你卻死了——  
大理石般沈重，一只充滿神祇的袋子，  
慘白的雕像——有著一根灰色腳趾  
大如舊金山的海狗

和一顆沈浮於怪異的大西洋中的頭顱  
把綠色的豆子傾在藍色之上  
在美麗的瑙塞特的海水中。  
我曾祈求能尋回你。  
啊，你。

以德國的口音，在波蘭的市鎮  
被戰爭，戰爭，戰爭的壓路機  
輾壓磨平。  
但是這市鎮的名稱是很尋常的。  
我的波蘭朋友

說起碼有一兩打之多。  
所以我從來未能告訴你該把  
腳，你的根，放在何處，  
從來無法和你交談。  
舌頭在下顎膠著。

膠著於鐵蒺藜的陷阱裡。  
我，我，我，我，  
我幾乎說不出話來  
我以為每個德國人都是你。  
而淫穢的語言

一具引擎，一具引擎  
當我是猶太人般地斥退我  
一個被送往達浩，奧胥維茲，巴森<sup>①</sup>的猶太人。  
我開始學習猶太的談吐。  
我想我有理由成為猶太人的。

提洛爾的雪，維也納的清啤酒  
並非十分純正。  
以我的吉卜賽血緣和詭異的運道  
加上我的塔洛紙牌，我的塔洛紙牌  
我真有幾分像猶太人呢。

我始終畏懼你，  
你的德國空軍，你的德國武士。  
你整齊的短髭，  
和你印歐語族的眼睛，明澈的藍。  
裝甲隊員，裝甲隊員，啊你——

不是上帝，只是個卍字  
 如此黝黑就是天空也無法呼嘯而過。  
 每一個女人都崇拜法西斯主義者，  
 長靴踩在臉上，野蠻  
 野蠻如你一般獸性的心。

你站在黑板旁邊，爹地，  
 我有這麼一張你的照片，  
 一道裂痕深深刻入顎部而不在腳上  
 但還是同樣的魔鬼，一點也不  
 遜於那曾把我美好赤紅的心

從中擊破的黑人。  
 你下葬那年我十歲。  
 二十歲時我就試圖自殺  
 想回到，回到，回到你的身邊。  
 我以為屍骨也是一樣的。

但是他們把我拖離此一劫數，  
 還用膠水將我黏合。  
 之後我知道該怎麼做。  
 我塑造了一尊你的偶像，  
 一個帶著《我的奮鬥》<sup>②</sup>眼神的黑衣人

一個拷問台和螺旋鈕的愛好者。  
 我說著我願意，我願意。  
 所以爹地，我終於完了。  
 黑色的電話線源斷了，  
 聲音就是無法爬行而過。

如果說我已殺了一個人，我就等於殺了兩個——  
 那吸血鬼說他就是你  
 並且啜飲我的血已一年，  
 實際是七年，如果你真想知道。  
 爹地，你現在可以安息了。

你肥胖的黑心裡藏有一把利刀  
 村民們從來就沒有喜歡過你  
 他們在你身上舞蹈踐踏。  
 而他們很清楚那就是你。  
 爹地，爹地，你這渾球，我完了。

註  
 ②

② 集中營之名稱。

：希特勒之自傳。

Fever 103°

Pure? What does it mean?



The tongues of hell  
Are dull, dull as the triple

5 Tongues of dull, fat Cerberus  
Who wheezes at the gate. Incapable  
Of licking clean

The aguey tendon, the sin, the sin.  
The tinder cries.  
The indelible smell

10 Of a snuffed candle!  
Love, love, the low smokes roll  
From me like Isadora's scarves, I'm in a fright

One scarf will catch and anchor in the wheel.  
Such yellow sullen smokes  
15 Make their own element. They will not rise,

But trundle round the globe  
Choking the aged and the meek,  
The weak

20 Hothouse baby in its crib,  
The ghastly orchid  
Hanging its hanging garden in the air,

Devilish leopard!  
Radiation turned it white  
And killed it in an hour.

25 Greasing the bodies of adulterers  
Like Hiroshima ash and eating in.  
The sin. The sin.

Darling, all night  
I have been flickering, off, on, off, on.  
The sheets grow heavy as a lecher's kiss.

30 Three days. Three nights.  
Lemon water, chicken  
Water make me retch.

I am too pure for you or anyone.  
Your body  
35 Hurts me as the world hurts God. I am a lantern

My head a moon  
Of Japanese paper, my gold beaten skin  
Infinitely delicate and infinitely expensive.

40 Does not my heat astound you. And my light.  
All by myself I am a huge camellia  
Glowing and coming and going, flush on flush.

I think I am going up,  
 I think I may rise—  
 The beads of hot metal fly, and I, love, I  
 45 Am a pure acetylene  
 Virgin  
 Attended by roses,  
 By kisses, by cherubim,  
 By whatever these pink things mean.  
 50 Not you, nor him  
 Not him, nor him  
 (My selves dissolving, old whore petticoats)—  
 To Paradise.

### 高熱一〇三度

張芬齡譯

純潔？這是什麼意思？  
 地獄之舌  
 遲鈍，鈍如三重之

舌附於遲鈍肥胖的塞伯斯身上  
 它在冥府的大門口喘息。無能  
 舔淨

寒戰的牛腱，罪惡，罪惡。  
 火種在泣訴。  
 驅不散的氣味是

撲鼻的蠟燭！  
 親愛的，這低低的煙霧自我身上  
 飄出如伊莎朵拉<sup>①</sup>的圍巾。我恐怕

有條圍巾會緊緊纏住輪子。  
 如此黃且陰鬱的煙霧  
 自己衍生出元素。它們不會上昇，

只是繞著地球滾動  
 使年老和溫馴的人窒息，  
 羸弱的

溫室中的嬰兒在加欄的小床內，  
 慘白的果園  
 把空中花園懸掛於半空，

兇殘的花豹！  
 輻射使它變白  
 不到一個小時就斃命。



在通姦者的身上塗抹油脂  
像廣島的灰燼，並且吞噬著。  
罪惡。罪惡。

親愛的，整個晚上  
我都閃爍不定，暗，明，暗，明。  
被褥變得和色鬼的親吻同樣地沈重。

三天。三夜。  
檸檬水，雞肉  
汁，水汁使我嘔吐。

我太純潔了不適合你或任何人。  
你的身體  
刺傷了我就像世人刺傷了上帝。我是一盞燈籠——

我的頭是日本紙做的  
月亮，黃金槌薄的皮膚  
極其精美極其昂貴。

我的熱度沒有嚇壞你嗎？還有我的光。  
獨處時我是株巨大的山茶  
閃爍且來回走動著，枝葉茂密。

我想我在上升，  
我想我可以升起——  
灼熱的金屬珠子飛著，而我，親愛的，我

是純潔的乙炔  
處女  
由玫瑰守護著，

由吻，由帶翼的天使，  
由粉紅色事物所代表的一切涵義。  
不是你，不是他

不是他，也不是他  
（我的自我逐漸瓦解，老妓女的襯裙）——  
飛向天堂。

註①：即舞蹈家鄧肯。她在參加宴會出來後，踏上汽車，當汽車發動時，她頸上的長圍巾被捲進輪中，將她活活絞死。

Lady Lazarus

I have done it again.  
One year in every ten

I manage it—

5 A sort of walking miracle, my skin  
Bright as a Nazi lampshade,  
My right foot

A paperweight,  
My face a featureless, fine  
Jew linen.

10 Peel off the napkin  
O my enemy.  
Do I terrify?—

The nose, the eye pits, the full set of teeth?  
The sour breath  
15 Will vanish in a day.

Soon, soon the flesh  
The grave cave ate will be  
At home on me

20 And I a smiling woman.  
I am only thirty.  
And like the cat I have nine times to die.

This is Number Three.  
What a trash  
To annihilate each decade.

25 What a million filaments.  
The peanut-crunching crowd  
Shoves in to see

Them unwrap me hand and foot  
The big strip tease.  
30 Gentlemen, ladies

These are my hands  
My knees.  
I may be skin and bone,

35 Nevertheless, I am the same, identical woman.  
The first time it happened I was ten.  
It was an accident.

The second time I meant  
To last it out and not come back at all.  
I rocked shut

40 As a seashell.  
They had to call and call  
And pick the worms off me like sticky pearls.



Dying  
 Is an art, like everything else.  
 45 I do it exceptionally well.  
  
 I do it so it feels like hell.  
 I do it so it feels real.  
 I guess you could say I've a call.  
  
 It's easy enough to do it in a cell.  
 50 It's easy enough to do it and stay put.  
 It's the theatrical  
  
 Comeback in broad day  
 To the same place, the same face, the same brute  
 Amused shout:  
  
 55 'A miracle!'  
 That knocks me out.  
 There is a charge  
  
 For the eyeing of my scars, there is a charge  
 For the hearing of my heart—  
 60 It really goes.  
  
 And there is a charge, a very large charge  
 For a word or a touch  
 Or a bit of blood  
  
 Or a piece of my hair or my clothes.  
 65 So, so, Herr Doktor.  
 So, Herr Enemy.  
  
 I am your opus,  
 I am your valuable,  
 The pure gold baby  
  
 70 That melts to a shriek.  
 I turn and burn.  
 Do not think I underestimate your great concern.  
  
 Ash, ash—  
 You poke and stir.  
 75 Flesh, bone, there is nothing there—  
  
 A cake of soap,  
 A wedding ring.  
 A gold filling.  
  
 Herr God, Herr Lucifer  
 80 Beware  
 Beware.  
  
 Out of the ash  
 I rise with my red hair

And I eat men like air.

# 女拉扎瑞斯

鄭敏譯<sup>4</sup>

我又幹了一次。  
每十年一次，  
我這樣安排它。

像一種行走着的奇蹟，我的皮膚  
透亮好像納粹的燈罩  
我的右腳

一個鎮紙尺  
我的臉沒有五官，  
一塊猶太的細麻布。

把這塊飯巾扒開  
啊，我的敵人，  
我嚇着你了嗎？——

這鼻子，這眼窩，這滿嘴的牙？  
這股酸臭氣息  
在一天裡能散發盡。

很快，很快  
那被墳墓蠶食的肌膚  
就會和我和睦相處

我，一個微笑的女人  
我不過三十歲  
像貓我也有九次死的機會。

這是第三次  
多無聊，每十年  
要打發掉一次

怎麼樣的一百萬條細絲啊！  
嚼着花生米的群眾  
紛至沓來，來看

他們剝開我，從手到腳  
大型的剝衣舞  
先生們，女士們

這是我的手

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<sup>4</sup> From *Oumei xiandaipai shiji*, edited by Dong Sen  
(Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1989)



我的膝蓋  
我可能是皮包骨

但，我是那同一個女人  
第一次發生是在我十歲那年  
那是一次事故

第二次我本打算  
堅持到底，再也不回生  
我緊閉着

搖擺像一個海蚌殼  
他們不斷地叫我，一次又一次  
並且攝走我體內的蟲子，像粘珍珠。

死亡  
是一種藝術，像別的東西一樣  
我特別會幹這事。

我幹得它像地獄  
我幹得它像真的  
我想你可以說我有一個使命

在密室裡幹很容易  
幹完了不再改變很容易  
是那舞臺式的重返

在大白天，讓我不知所措  
同樣的地方，同樣的面孔，同樣野蠻  
好玩地喊道：

“一個奇蹟！”  
這些  
都要收費

瞧我的傷疤要收費  
聽我的心臟要收費  
進行得不錯

要交一筆不小的費  
爲了一句話，或者摸一下  
或者要一點血

一縷我的頭髮，一片衣裳  
因此，因此，醫生先生  
仇人先生

我是你們的大作  
你們的寶貝  
你們的金娃娃

它熔化時發出尖叫聲  
我轉動着，燃燒着  
別以爲我低估你們的關心

灰，灰——  
你撿着，翻着  
肉、骨頭，這些都沒有了——

一塊肥皂  
一個結婚戒指  
一顆金牙

上帝先生，魔鬼先生  
小心  
小心

從灰堆裡  
我升起，紅頭髮  
我吃人像吸空氣。



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